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April 2019
Pet of the Month
**AUTUMN
FALLS**



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FROM THE EDITOR

WHEN we showed up at the Moonlight Rollerway in Glendale to shoot our March Pet of the Month, Jay Marie, I realized I had made a crucial mistake. We had no generator in the lighting van, and plugs were off-limits inside the venue.

This iconic roller rink opened in 1956, but its lighting system was built in the forties. Despite my fuck-up, we made it work. And Jay Marie looked like a major babe in her white feathered coat and roller skates, sucking on a rainbow cock lollipop. Plus, the owner was happy have us back. *Penthouse* had shot an all-girl three-way on the rink back in 1993.

Speaking of all-girls, this issue is loaded with beautiful, intelligent women, including rock 'n' roll icon Jennifer Herrema of Royal Trux, stand-up comedian Ester Steinberg, and writer/actress/comedian Jamie Lee. We have two of the newest Penthouse Pets, Jay Marie and Autumn Falls, as well as our latest CyberCutie, Scarlett Bloom. (Do NOT call her Asian. She's black, guys. She will smack you.)

I said it before, and I'll say it again: *Penthouse* magazine is a place of female worship. Pussy is God.

Mish Barber-Way
Executive Editor

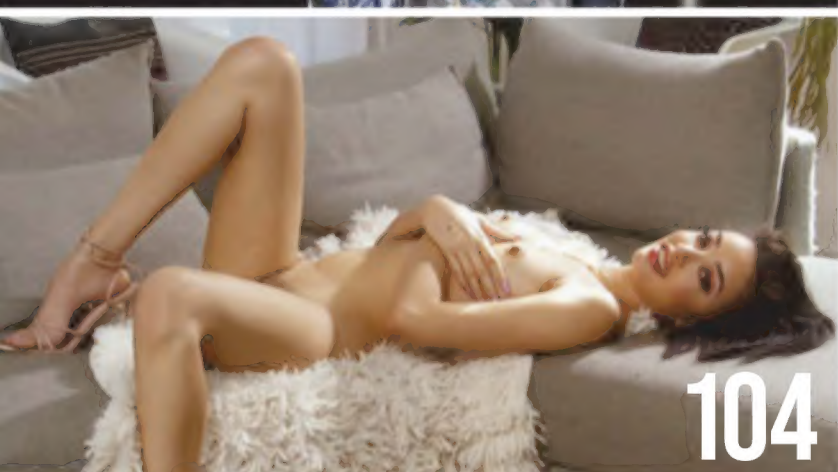
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MOONLIGHT MINX

March
Pet of the Month
Jay Marie





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February 2019 Pet of the Month
Anna Lisa Wagner

Dear *Penthouse*, I'm hoping you can use your special skills to help promote sexy female truck drivers in your magazine, and simultaneously educate car drivers (mainly aggressive men) on how to drive around trucks without getting injured or killed. Think *Overdrive* magazine circa 1972-1973.

—Rick B., via email

[Ed: Rick, I love chicks on trucks as much as the next lot lizard. Get me a rig and I will make this happen. This is very *Trailer Park Boys*. You are speaking to my Canadian heart.]

I have enjoyed your magazine since puberty. I first began to steal them from my mother's boyfriend at a younger age than legal. Ha! Because he wasn't supposed to have them either, he could never admit that I stole them. A perfect

situation for a young man and his friends.

Thank you so very much for Matt Gallagher's November article, "Saying Goodbye." Selfishly, I am missing statesmen like Senator John McCain more than ever before. Thankfully, with a little encouragement, some of us are willing to step up and stand as one for our children again. There has always existed a duality in mankind. Respect is somewhat of a lost art in Washington these days. We as a nation are going to feel a ripple effect soon that is not going to be comfortable.

—David J., via email

[Ed: Thank you for your kind words, David. *Penthouse* has always provided a space for veterans, and we will continue to do so until we shut our doors.]

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LETTER OF THE MONTH

NUDE ON ARRIVAL

I had been almost five years since I'd seen Ryan, so I was nervous as I tried to finish cleaning my apartment before he arrived for dinner. We'd been in the same college marching band, and despite being wildly attracted to him, nothing had ever happened between us.

A few months before the evening when we were finally going to see each other again, a mutual friend revealed that, in college, Ryan had desperately wanted to ask me out, but had never worked up the courage to go for it. The friend said he was worried I would think he was a perv and never talk to him again.

I'd only ever had sex once, despite the fact I was 27, and even that had mostly just been an effort on my part to shed my status as a virgin. I still wanted to know what everyone got so worked up about, and so I had decided that Ryan was going to show me.

There were probably a thousand different ways I could approach this situation, but subtlety has never been my strong suit, so I decided I was simply going to answer the door naked and see what happened. If Ryan ran away screaming, I would possibly die of mortification, but something about the sexy flirtation that had been happening in our emails gave me confidence that he wouldn't.

I could feel my heart hammering in my chest as I saw Ryan park outside and walk up to my place. I was still wearing a robe, so there was time to change my mind, but I had spent so long playing out this fantasy in my head that I knew I had to do it.

Ryan knocked confidently on the door and I shrugged out of the robe, throwing it onto the couch. My cheeks were already flushed red in embarrassment, but before I could lose my nerve, I flung the front door open.

Ryan's jaw literally dropped, and he glanced behind him, then came inside and closed the door quickly.

"Hi, Ryan," I said with a sheepish grin, refusing to let my hands leave my sides to cover my nakedness.

"Nora. Hi! You were wearing more clothes the last time I saw you," he choked out, doing an admirable job of keeping his eyes locked on mine.

"It's okay," I said, not sure where this confidence was coming from, "you can look."

He tilted his head as though trying to figure me out before slowly lowering his gaze, which trailed down my body and swept back up again. His cheeks were flushed, too, but I didn't think it was purely from embarrassment. His eyes raked over me again, and he grinned.

"I was hoping things would head in this direction," he said,

"but you've definitely saved me from spending the night awkwardly trying to decide whether I should try to kiss you at the end of dinner."

"You can kiss me now if you want. You know, get it over with so you can relax."

He did as I suggested, lightly cupping my chin and leaning down to press his warm lips to mine. It was a gentlemanly kiss at first, but then he came back for more, slanting his mouth over mine and nipping lightly with his teeth.

It seemed I wasn't the only one with some tension to release. He broke the kiss, but only to murmur, against the sensitive skin of my neck, "I'm not sure I'm going to be able to relax while the object of my every college fantasy is standing here naked...but unsatisfied."

"So satisfy me," I said, still wondering how the hell I'd become possessed by the spirit of a woman with far more confidence and experience than I ever had.

Ryan shrugged out of his jacket, and like I was living the porn fantasy of my dreams, lust exploded between us.

Even with both of us stripping layers, we couldn't get Ryan's clothes off fast enough. When he was completely naked, too, I didn't even get a chance to check him out before he was kissing me again.

Somehow, we made it across the room to the couch. As we settled down into the soft cushions, Ryan kissed his way to my breasts, then paused to look up at me. "Do you know how many times I imagined what

these would look like?"

I bit my lip and shook my head.

"That's probably for the best. If you had any idea how often I had fantasized about this, you'd probably kick me out."

I didn't tell him that I'd done the same.

I wanted so badly for it to be good between us, but I was out of my element. I didn't know what I was supposed to do. Meanwhile, Ryan was licking my nipple, teasing it with his teeth, and it felt like I was dissolving into molten desire.

"Fuck me, Ryan," I blurted out, thinking that's what people said in this situation, while desperately hoping he couldn't tell how insecure I really was.

"Oh, I want to fuck you...but not yet. There's something else I've spent a lot of time thinking about that I need to do first."

Ryan dropped to his knees on the floor in front of me. When his warm, wet mouth found my clit, I jerked at the intensity of it. No one had ever gone down on me before.

As Ryan started to flick his tongue in tight circles, he thrust two fingers inside me and I instantly stopped worrying about what I should be doing. I was lost to the pleasure of the sensations. It felt incredible.

**I DECIDED I WAS
SIMPLY GOING TO ANSWER
THE DOOR NAKED AND SEE
WHAT HAPPENED.**



I could only moan as he continued thrusting and licking. I tried to stop him to get him to fuck me when I knew I was going to come, but he kept going, driving me to a clenching, shuddering orgasm.

As I caught my breath, he pulled a condom from his wallet, put it on, and before I could even start to feel insecure again, he touched his cock to my pussy and slid it inside.

The pressure felt amazing, his shaft spreading me wide as he began thrusting rhythmically. When he pressed his thumb against my clit at the same time, I got lost again, mindless with pleasure and begging for more.

I came again, and he must have done the same because he groaned and held himself deep within me. It was the first time I had ever come with a man inside me, and I was determined

to make him do it again before he went home.

He mumbled, "Why the fuck didn't we do this in college?"

"Because we never would have made it to class?" I laughed, feeling uninhibited and wanton for the first time in my life. "Do you want some dinner before we do it again?"

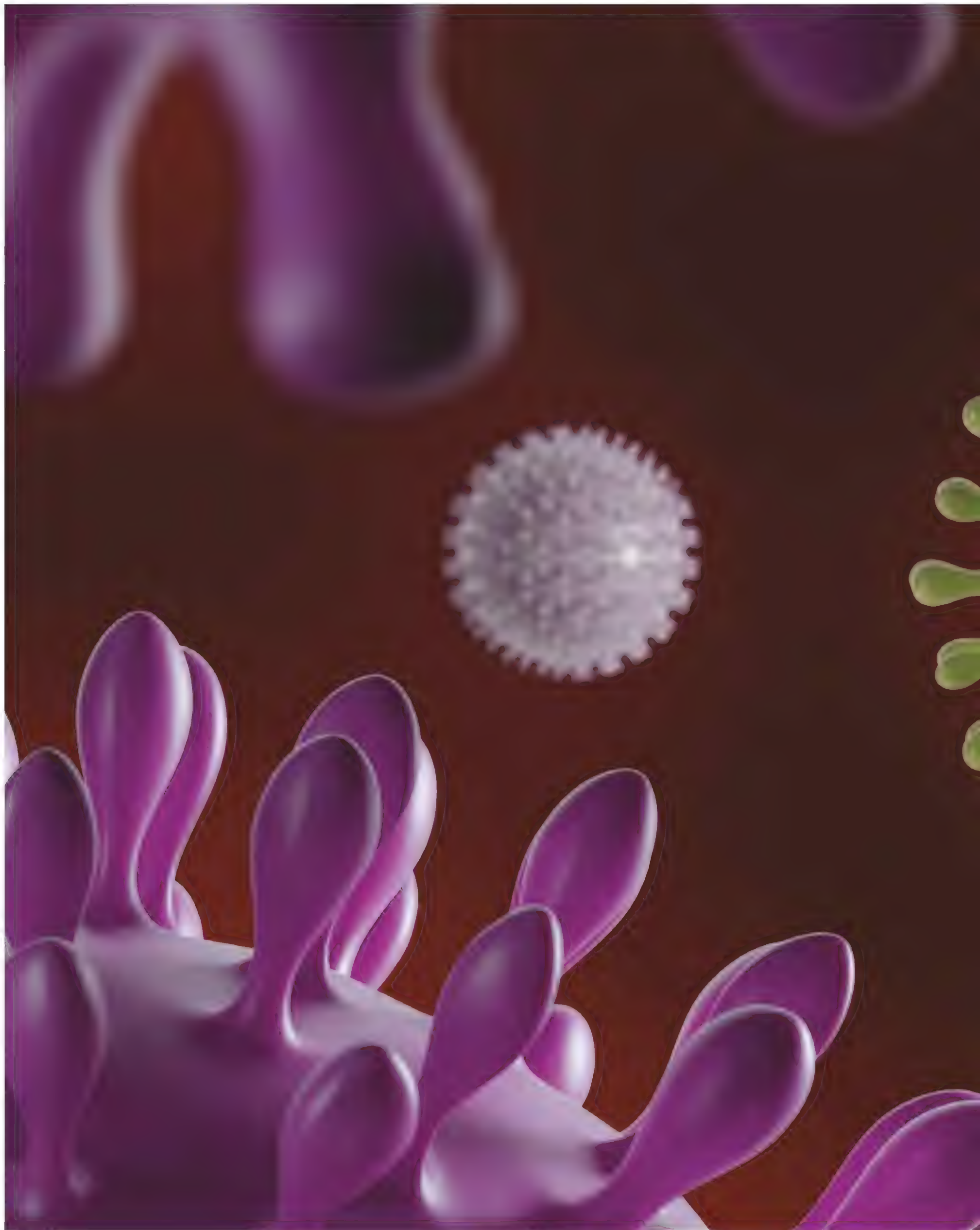
"There's actually dinner, too?" he marvelled. "I thought you had just lured me here for sex under false pretenses!"

I swatted him on the ass, he reached out and squeezed my behind, and then I headed to the kitchen. My wild idea had paid off.

—Amanda M., Lincoln, Nebraska

CONTINUED ON PAGE 142

Seeing is believing. When you've had the encounter you've been hoping for, let us know about it! Send your letters to: *Penthouse* magazine, 8944 Mason Avenue, Chatsworth, CA 91311, or email us at letters@penthouse.com.



THE DEBRIEF

PUMP IT UP

WORKPLACE SANDWICH RAPE,
MICROPENIS PRIDE,
A BRAIN-EATING STD,
AND OTHER ODDITIES FROM
AROUND THE GLOBE.



PHOTO: SHUTTERSTOCK.COM / BY PIUS LEE

ORAL OBJECTION

MOST men are sexually awkward, bumbling cretins when it comes to the art of love.

Again and again, science has proven that, on average, it takes the American male 15 seconds to achieve an erection, a half-minute to have an orgasm, and another 15 seconds before they fall dead asleep, leaving women sad and lonely, despondent and furious.

Then again, some women fall short in the area of sexual hygiene. If left untended too long, a combination of sweat and vaginal goop leaves their nether regions smelling like Fisherman's Wharf. At times, it's so bad you can almost hear seagulls.

We need to make it clear we're not saying that Amy Nicole Perrino of Boone County, Missouri, has a stench-ridden vag. But from the mug shots we've seen, she looks like a hybrid of a stegosaurus and a Comanche warrior, so we're not ruling it out, either.

Neither are we implying that her husband, who is unnamed in news reports but whom we choose to call "Sal," is a sexually subpar man-child with a tiny cock and severe erectile dysfunction. Truly, who are we to judge?

What we do know, according to police reports, is that on

a recent Sunday night, his battle-ax of a wife was waddling around naked in their home when she forcefully grabbed her hubby and demanded that he perform cunnilingus on her.

When he refused—and again, it's not necessarily because she has a vaginal odor problem, because we've neither met nor smelled her—the husband told police that she punched him more than 25 times with both her fist and a cell phone. Then she allegedly grabbed a belt and whipped him with it.

Although he attempted to flee, she ran after him, it is alleged, shoved him to the ground, sat on his face, and screamed, "Eat my pussy!"

Her husband claims that for a brief spell, he was unable to breathe and feared that she might suffocate him with that stegosaurus snatch of hers.

The guy received medical treatment and told police that he fears for his life because his wife can get violent "very, very quickly."

Wouldn't it have been easier for everyone if she'd acted like a grown-up and just fingered herself while ambling around their home in her birthday suit?

PUTTING THE MEAT IN LUNCH MEAT

SIGH. We're a little peeved that we even have to point this out, but sandwiches are for eating, not for jerking off with, people!

Unless it's your own sandwich, of course. We'd have no moral objection if you were to pleasure yourself with Italian hoagies until the cows came home. But under no circumstances should you masturbate with someone else's sandwich unless, according to the rules of polyamory, you request explicit permission beforehand.

A Pennsylvania department store employee named Anthony S. Maneval has been sentenced 3 to 12 months in prison after being convicted of holding a coworker's sandwich and panties while masturbating in the office.

At one point, Maneval, who is 36 and really should know better, pressed the sandwich against his body before rewrapping it and replacing it in the lunchroom refrigerator. His dastardly, disgusting act was captured on surveillance footage.

Said the sentencing judge: "[Maneval] did not deny his behavior. [He] admitted to police that he masturbated with the pink shorts and the sandwich and he had seminal fluid on his hand." The judge then pointed out that the woman ate the jizz-defiled sandwich.

The first rule of office lunchrooms: Never trust the mayonnaise.



PHOTO: SHUTTERSTOCK.COM / BY MOTORTION FILMS

DAMNATION FOR PREMATURE EJACULATION

GOD is clearly a misogynist, or he wouldn't have made it so easy for men and so difficult for women to have orgasms during sex.

Or maybe that was his plan all along, since hell is huge and can fit many more souls than are currently burning there. And not to fixate on the terrifying details, but there's no Wi-Fi in hell.

George Lutterodt is a marriage counselor in Ghana who recently warned that if a man repeatedly shoots his load, rolls over, and starts snoring before his wife reaches climax, that man will roast in molten lava for all eternity while God and the man's former wife laugh at him from their perch up in heaven.

Sounds like overkill, but this is God, so we're not going to ask questions. We've read the Bible, and boy does that fella have



ILLUSTRATION: SHUTTERSTOCK.COM / BY DAN COLLIER

anger issues.

Lutterodt made his startling—and, for inadequate married men, quite nightmarish—declaration at Prophet Sampson Amoateng's "Stars in Worship" event, the venue a place called the House of Miracle Ministries.

The counselor declared that one of the reasons God made men is to sexually satisfy women—which makes curious minds wonder, if a man can't satisfy women, who is truly to blame: the car or the automaker?

Lutterodt also stated that having an orgasm is part of worshipping God. To demonstrate his theory, he started touching his junk onstage.

This sounds like our kind of church, but the cost of taking an Uber to Ghana can only be described as "prohibitive."

MICROPENIS PRIDE

WITHOUT a penis, a man wouldn't be a man. With a small penis, he's in the ballpark, man-wise, but still not quite there, in the cruel eyes of many.

For guys hung like a thumb, it's a badge of shame. For everyone else, it's a source of mirth.

A recent survey that never actually was conducted reveals nearly 83 percent of comedy revolves around making fun of men with small dicks. Women mock and loathe them, and men fear the stigma of tiny-cockitude more than they fear their mothers and making their bed every morning.

It's almost as if they're a persecuted minority, but we don't want to spoil the fun and have them classified that way.

In the same way that many African-Americans have reclaimed the N-word, there's an odd subset of the micropenis community that has flipped the script and turned the root of their shame into an emblem of pride.

A man named Ant Smith has written *The Small Penis Bible*, announcing to the world that he transformed his bite-sized pecker from a matter of universal scorn to a feature that makes him proud. As Smith relates, he was mocked for his teeny

weenie while growing up and later endured the humiliation of condoms slipping off during sex. But now he says his wife loves his mini-wang (emphasis on the word "says").

Despite Ant Smith's groundbreaking work in helping form a new sexual identity movement, many men remain trapped under the crushing stigma of having a Vienna-sausage-sized schween.

The situation isn't helped by insensitive a-holes like the North Yorkshire Police in England, who posted the following description after a 20-year-old college student reported being flashed on her walk home one night:

"The man is described as white with a very pale complexion, aged between 35 and 45 years, around 5ft 10in tall with a fat build. He has very little chest or pubic hair, no obvious tattoos or scars, and he has what was described as a small penis with testicles that hang noticeably low."

The description upset enough people that police redacted it, essentially leaving the public looking for a fat, pale, and hairless man. As if *that's* any better than a bloke with a wee willy and giant balls.



PHOTO: SHUTTERSTOCK.COM / BY BRUM

NE-CROW-PHILIA

IF it surprises you to learn that several species of animals have sex with their dead, well, friend, you don't know much about animals, sex, or the dead.

The top dog in the necro-animal kingdom is the crow, a bird that symbolizes death to many people anyway, so what's the big dealio?

Kaeli Swift—who studies bird behavior at the University of Washington—recently conducted an experiment using taxidermied crow corpses to see if living crows would start fucking them.

Part of the experiment involved having the taxidermist position the stuffed birds so that some looked as if they were fully alive and others obviously dead.

To what we assume was her delight, Swift found that male crows—none of whom have dicks; they just sort of plop themselves over female crows' lady parts and drop their jizz—



were far more likely to start banging the dead-looking crows than the ones who appeared to be alive.

Elsewhere in the wild kingdom, a viral 2016 photo that appeared to depict a male kangaroo grieving over his dead mate actually turned out to be a pic of the male preparing to slip his sausage into his deceased partner.

And in 2003, a Dutch biologist published a paper titled “The first case of homosexual necrophilia in the mallard.” It described a male duck attempting to have gay sex with a dead duck for 75 fruitless minutes, which had to be frustrating for both duck and the Dutchman.

Other species known to have necro-sex include frogs, toads, penguins, marmosets, lizards, sea lions, and otters.

Wait a minute—toads? That's disgusting!

PHOTO: SHUTTERSTOCK.COM / BY MAGGIE MCMANUS

WRECKED RECTUMS

UNLESS you're some kind of demented freak who delights in the suffering of others, anal pain is never funny.

Kidding!

A man in England underwent emergency surgery after he shoved 15 hard-boiled eggs up his ass. They ultimately perforated his colon, filling his abdominal cavity with air and fluid. The eggs were peeled, which was his first mistake—everyone who inserts hard-boiled eggs up their poop chute knows that you leave the shells on.

Meanwhile, in China, a man's rectum fell straight out of his buttock while he was sitting on the toilet. He'd been straining to poop for a full half hour when he felt a “large lump” slip out of his anus.

The man was rushed to the hospital, where doctors learned that he'd been suffering from a rectal prolapse since he was four years old. Doctors—acting a bit insensitive if you ask us—blamed the man for not getting his prolapse treated.

Here we move on to Japan, where a man was arrested on murder charges for the crime of blasting compressed air up his friend's ass and killing him. As hilarious/tragic as this is, it's merely one of many deaths attributed to this devilish/delightful prank.



In Italy, doctors were forced to invent an entirely new tool in order to extract a 23-inch dildo a man had inserted into his rectum.

The typical tool for removing rectal foreign objects—sort of a tube into which slides a claw-like grabbing device that typically snags the offending dildo with minimal effort—proved ineffective, even impotent, in gaining traction over the slippery, French-bread-sized object.

So, using their world-famous Italian intuition, they fashioned a wire that was able to wrap itself around the gigantic prostate-pleasuring object like a lasso seizing a rampaging bull and yank it from the man's heinie-hole.

PHOTO: SHUTTERSTOCK.COM / BY STEPHANIE FREY

FORESKIN FACIALS

THERE comes a time in every woman's life when she notices she's not a spring chicken anymore. Her face starts to sag and wrinkles start forming on a once-smooth mug.

Since such a large part of a woman's self-esteem is based on her appearance—okay, who are we kidding, *all* of her self-esteem—a woman whose looks begin to fade starts flailing in the dark looking for a cure. It's an experience almost as painful as having your maidenhead popped or realizing that Justin Bieber will never love you back.

Apart from a face-lift, which can cost anywhere from \$20 (if performed in a motel room using bathtub caulk and rusty instruments) to \$300,000 (we just made that up), more and more women are turning to having their faces injected with needles containing the pulverized foreskins of South Korean infants.

We're not sure why all the babies have to come from South Korea, and for the sake of vain menopausal women everywhere, we would at least hope that the foreskins don't smell like kimchi. According to those who've received the treatment, the injections smell just like sperm, a detail instantly dialing up the weirdness meter.

"After a long flight I do like to lie down and be covered in a mask of liquefied cloned foreskins," actress Kate Beckinsale recently overshared on Instagram, before adding, "Frankly who doesn't?"

We can think of a lot of people, but why quibble?

The process uses Epidermal Growth Factor (EGF), a serum "derived from the progenitor cells of the human fibroblast taken from the foreskins of newborn babies."

It is painfully squirted into the face using dozens of microneedles jabbed into your cheeks hundreds of times, costs \$650, and we're not sure whether the circumcised infants receive any royalties.

To our knowledge, the only place in America that currently offers the treatment is Georgia Louise Atelier in New York City, which claims that the procedure is so popular there's currently a two-year waiting list.

We encourage you to wait.



PHOTO: SHUTTERSTOCK.COM / BY IRINA BG

FUN NEW STDs!

IF you're getting bored with herpes, chlamydia, gonorrhea, syphilis, genital warts, and HIV, slap yourself out of it, because a bumper crop of new sexually transmitted diseases are on the way!

A contagious bacterium called *Neisseria meningitidis*, which an estimated 5 to 10 percent of adults already carry in the back of their nose and throat, can cause a potentially deadly brain infection.

It's typically transmitted through kissing or oral sex. One study from the 1970s captured a male chimpanzee giving himself a urethral infection by passing the bacterium from his nose to his penis in the course of blowing himself.

Next up on our sampler plate of new STDs is *Mycoplasma genitalium*, one of the smallest bacterium known to science.

It was first identified in the 1980s and now infects an estimated 1 to 2 percent of the world population. It's often symptom-free but can lead to irritation of the urethra and cervix. In extreme cases, it can cause pelvic inflammatory disease, infertility, and stillbirth.



Shigella flexneri—aka Shigella dysentery—is transmitted via direct contact—usually of the anal-oral variety—with human feces.

Physicians first started documenting it in gay men 40 years ago. It can lead to crippling stomach cramps and explosive bloody diarrhea, which can really ruin the mood.

Finally, an STD known as donovanosis is caused by a bacterium called *Klebsiella granulomatis*. Though most common in equatorial areas, roughly 100 new cases are documented yearly in the U.S.

Usually spread through sexual intercourse, it can also be transmitted through oral sex. It first manifests as small, painless ulcers, which get larger and form bleeding red bumps.

As the disease intensifies, it flat-out destroys genital tissue. To our knowledge, it is the only flesh-eating STD known to humanity.

Suddenly, chlamydia doesn't seem that bad. In fact, chlamydia never seemed that bad at all. We even suspect that, like nougat—a confection that no one has ever been able to describe to our satisfaction—chlamydia might actually be a hoax.

PHOTO: SHUTTERSTOCK.COM / BY KATERYNA KON



BAA BAA BAE

WHEN a mother buys a toy for her son, she wants something that will be fun and educational but will also develop his intellect and prepare him for the oft-harsh realities of our topsy-turvy, willy-nilly, helter-skelter workaday world.

Unless she is a pervert and a deviant and a degenerate, though, what she clearly does *not* want to give her son is a “fancy dress inflatable sheep” that contains a hideous “stag night bonkin” hole in its rear end.

Tragically, this is precisely the fate that befell poor Mrs. Helen Cox, a Scottish mum who purchased the inflatable sheep from Amazon because her five-year-old son Alfie needed it as a prop for a local Christmas play’s nativity scene.

When the sheep arrived, Mrs. Cox noticed it appeared to be a mite saucier than most inflatable livestock tend to be—long eyelashes, red lipstick, and a bow on its head that screamed, “C’mere, big boy.”

“It took forever to blow up,” Mrs. Cox lamented. “I stood there blowing and blowing until the air reached its legs....” (Perhaps here she could have chosen a more appropriate

word than “blowing”?)

“I hurriedly popped the stopper back in so it wouldn’t deflate,” she continued, “and suddenly spotted the huge hole in the bum. I couldn’t believe what I was seeing.”

The scriptures of all major world religions make it abundantly clear that having sex with sheep is a sin. How much worse, then, would it be for a five-year-old boy to have sex with an inflatable sheep equipped with long eyelashes and red lipstick?

The answer: *much* worse. It seems like the sort of thing that would send our maker into a tizzy.

To Mrs. Cox’s dismay, young Alfie immediately developed a deep emotional bond with the sheep and the two are reportedly inseparable now.

His mom says she plans to flat-out lie to her son and tell him that the Elf on the Shelf stole it. Sometimes you have to fib to your children to protect them from a life of bugging inanimate objects.

At press time, the inflatable sheep was unavailable for comment. 🔑

SUPER CUTS

The Nastiest Self-Surgery Scenes in Film.

BY PAUL JAMES

ILLUSTRATION BY HEATHER BENJAMIN

MOST movie tough guys can be divided into two categories: those who are good at doling out pain, and those who are good at taking it.

Think of it as the difference between Rambo and Rocky, or Steven Seagal in *Under Siege* and Bruce Willis in *Die Hard*. But there's a third, even more impressive brand of movie-character toughness—men and women who have no choice but to bring pain upon themselves.

You know the kind of scene I'm talking about. Our hero finds himself in a remote wilderness, or behind enemy lines during wartime. He's got an arrow in his shoulder, or a leg caught in a bear trap, or a bullet in his thigh, and the only way to escape is to perform some improvised surgery.

Why are these scenes even more excruciating than the bigger, spectacular moments of gruesome movie violence? It's because they have a unique way of yanking you out of your headspace and making you aware of your own body and its many vulnerabilities. Hide your eyes and grit your teeth all you like—you can't help but wonder, *Could I do that?*

I'm no different. So I've assembled a list of self-surgery scenes, ranked according to the chances that I, a somewhat squeamish nerd with no medical experience, would be able to duplicate the procedures in real life.

8. *Total Recall*

In Paul Verhoeven's 1990 sci-fi blockbuster, Douglas Quaid (Arnold Schwarzenegger) finds himself on the run from the governor of Mars. As part of his evasive maneuvers, he must extract a tracking device that's been implanted in his sinus cavity. A hilarious sequence follows in which Quaid sticks a sort of futuristic caulking gun up his nose and pulls out a red orb the size of a golf ball. Arnie's face goes through a lot of agonized contortions in this scene, but it doesn't seem like too tricky a feat, comparatively speaking. After all, since the device was designed to be extractable, the process seems more uncomfortable than painful. And what a relief you must feel once you're done!

7. *Game Night*

At a certain point in this entertaining, one-crazy-night comedy from last year, suburban husband Max (Jason Bateman) gets shot in the arm, forcing his wife Annie (Rachel McAdams) to figure out how to extract the bullet using only items she's scavenged from a dollar store, while guided by an instructional video from an alt-right website. I strongly identify with Max in this scene, from the gag reflex that kicks in as soon as the blood begins to flow to his annoyance at the way his wife has arranged the display settings on her smartphone. Not fainting when the penknife accidentally makes contact with bone would be a challenge, but I think I could soldier through.

6. *Prometheus*

In Ridley Scott's 2012 *Alien* prequel, an astronaut (played by Noomi Rapace) who believed she was sterile suddenly appears to be pregnant. Since she is in an *Alien* movie, she knows that's no human embryo inside her, but a killer baby xenomorph. And so she seals herself into an automated surgery pod and tells the computer to give her an emergency caesarean. As grueling as this experience may look, it's not as sustained a test of one's

pain threshold as other scenes on this list. Once Rapace's character hits the button that sets the operation in motion, she's a passive patient in the care of a supercomputer. She even gets local anesthesia!

5. *Evil Dead 2: Dead by Dawn*

At first blush, the showstopping moment when a crazed Ash (Bruce Campbell) chain-saws off his own hand might seem to be way too low on this list. But here's my logic: At this point in Sam Raimi's 1987 splatter comedy, Ash's hand is possessed by a demonic entity and won't stop smashing plates and bottles over his head. It seems like a kill-or-be-killed scenario to me, and moreover, the heat of battle would mute the pain of the amputation process. In fact, the hardest aspect of this scene for me to replicate might be revving up a chain saw with my teeth.

4. *Cast Away*

Chuck Noland (Tom Hanks) extracting a rotten tooth using nothing but a mirror and the blade of an ice skate is easily the most excruciating scene in Hanks's entire filmography (okay, with the possible exception of his pidgin-English monologues from *Cloud Atlas*). Noland's intense whimpering, the horrifying sound of the tooth coming loose, and the crudity of his tools all combine to elevate this moment in Robert Zemeckis's survival drama, released in 2000, to the pantheon of cinematic dental trauma, right alongside John Schlesinger's *Marathon Man*, Park Chan-wook's *Oldboy*, and Frank Oz's *Little Shop of Horrors*.

3. *Saw*

While later films in James Wan's horror franchise played up the elaborate backstory of the serial killer Jigsaw, this 2004 original was juiced by the same elemental appeal as those questions 12-year-olds concoct for each other during sleepovers: Would you rather freeze or burn to death? Swim



through a mile of shit or a mile of dead bodies? Saw through your own leg or let your wife and child die? Before Cary Elwes's character takes a hacksaw to a limb, he has to muster the willpower by channeling the insanity of his situation. Could I work myself into the same leg-lopping froth? I'm doubtful.

2. *127 Hours*

In this 2010 drama, the act of self-surgery is far more than one vivid element of an overall story. Every viewer who bought a ticket knew they were going to see James Franco's character remove his own arm with a pocketknife. And the rest of the movie—the flashbacks, Franco's rambling monologues to his video camera—serves only to delay the inevitable moment. What really sells the agony of this sequence is the way director Danny Boyle reminds you that Franco's doomed hiker doesn't just have to cut through bone and muscle; he's got to slice through his own nervous system as well. And that's why *my* corpse would still be pinned at the bottom of a Utah crevice to this day.

1. *Gerald's Game*

Mike Flanagan's 2017 Stephen King adaptation is built upon an elegantly simple scenario: After Gerald (Bruce Greenwood) and Jessie (Carla Gugino) begin a romantic getaway in a remote cabin, he manacles her to a bed for kinky fun, then dies of a heart attack with the handcuff keys beyond her reach. How will she free herself? I won't spoil the ending, except to say that she commits an act I've never seen another movie character do. It traumatized me for days. And it introduced me to an unwelcome word: *degloving*. Carla Gugino, you are cinema's ultimate self-surgery badass, and I hope you'll understand if I'd rather not shake your hand. 🔪

Paul James is a playwright, editor, broadcaster, and a film and pop culture commentator for such outlets as CBC Radio, Salon, and Eighteen Bridges magazine. He is the cohost of the podcast Trash, Art & the Movies. Follow him on Twitter @myelbow

STRAIGHT OUTTA CAIRO

Egypt's Maurice Louca is making some of the coolest music on the planet.

BY ZACHARY LIPEZ



ONE nice thing about the music industry completely collapsing in the last decade is that you don't have to give a shit about the music industry. Unless you are one of the 23 people on the planet who still listens to the radio and only the radio, or you've signed some pact with the devil mandating that you get your listening pleasure only from bands that play Super Bowl halftimes, the music you consume is entirely up to you. Freedom, terrible freedom!

Of course, the sheer magnitude of options can be daunting. But that's why you read *Penthouse*. For the music recommendations. And I'm here to tell you that 2019 is the year you can finally get into Egyptian avant-jazz/rock and electronica. Because we love freedom and beauty and all the possibilities granted to us in this wide-open world, this is the year we all start listening to Maurice Louca.

The term "genius" is so overused it's almost meaningless, but I'm going to go ahead and call Louca a genius. Born and operating in Cairo, Louca is a cross-genre polymath who serves as a pillar within the Egyptian alternative music scene—a scene that, to my mind, is providing some of the most exciting current sounds on the planet.

His earliest recordings, beginning with the band Bikya in 2007, were folk/electronic hybrids as indebted to Detroit techno as Egypt's traditional music. Since then, he's become well-known for two things: classical compositions that seamlessly integrate noise and the last hundred years of international experimental music, and frequent collaborations with artists from both the Middle East and the West.

All these highbrow designations being thrown around may make it seem like Louca is coming from an impenetrable place—and maybe even a dull one, if your comfort zone is rock, country, or rap. But friends, I would never tell you to go to school. The instrumental work is as lovely and, well, groovy as your old Portishead albums. And his band, Alif, a prog-ish rock collaboration with musicians from all over the Middle East (including Palestinian/Egyptian Tamer Abu Ghazaleh, another entirely brilliant favorite of mine), would fit comfortably in one's music collection between Mars Volta and Radiohead.



Maurice Louca's Elephantine band

I'm telling you, this shit is fun, if occasionally darkly so. A couple months ago, the Lebanese singer/songwriter Yasmine Hamdan was playing around the corner from the bar I tend at. Before she performed, my bar was full of young, good-looking hipsters largely of the Semitic persuasion. I took a chance and put on Louca's 2017 folk/pop collaboration with the aforementioned Abu Ghazaleh and Egyptian star vocalist Maryam Saleh. Immediately, the crowd was swaying, singing along, and ordering more drinks.

In a world where pop and avant garde are no longer regimented, the kids will have their say. And the kids only care if shit bangs, even if said banging is sublime.

A liberal Coptic Christian in 2019 Egypt, Louca wouldn't be blamed for keeping his head down and his music conservative. But he doesn't do that, and his work reminds us that the avant garde and rock and jazz are all rooted in liberation (in theory, if not always in practice). It's impossible to listen to Louca and his contemporaries, including fellow pop subversive Nadah El Shazly and the metal discotheque oddball Tarkamt, and not hear a world of possibility often absent

in the codified, shrunken, market-driven pop of the West.

This music is the food of hope, with all the inherent risks, both artistically and societally, that hope brings.

The title of Maurice Louca's newest album, *Elephantine*, is apt. Released on February 1 by American label Northern Spy, it's a huge, gorgeous beast, with Louca leading a 12-member ensemble. While technically "jazz," and heavily indebted to free jazz, I'm happy to call it funk if that'll make you more likely to buy it, and I wouldn't be lying if I did.

The songs swing and chime, build until release, and then keep rising. Like his music with American bassist Alan Bishop in the band The Dwarfs of East Agouza, *Elephantine* makes accessible what would seem knotty on paper. You don't need to know or even give a damn about jazz or "new music" or any of that to receive the album's pleasures.

It does help if you don't mind saxophones, but if you do mind them, ask yourself this question: If the ghost of Springsteen's saxophonist Clarence Clemons showed up tomorrow, would you kick him out of bed for eating crackers?

Hey, you can listen to what you want. And if the shrill repetition of depressive teenagers and rock ballads written years before you were born make you happy, that's fine. I love that stuff, too, and, really, life is hard enough without being judged from the pages of your favorite skin mag. But life is also about sharing our enthusiasms, making each other mixes, lending each other books, and trying to convince your friends to give *Solo* a try. It may be a waste of time but, seriously, what, besides eating and screwing, isn't?

There's a world under our feet and it just keeps going. All the way to Cairo. Check out Maurice Louca. All the old guard are dead or at the Grammys, which is essentially the same thing. So why not get reckless and take advantage of that illusion of freedom we all endeavor to enjoy? If it's the worst decision you make in 2019, I envy your choices. 

Zachary Lipez is a writer and bartender in New York City. He is the author (with collaborators Stacy Wakefield and Nick Zinner) of "131 Different Things," which published in late 2018.

NICK FOLES



Nick Foles and his wife, Tori Moore, at the 2018 ESPY Awards

NICK Foles is not the most talented quarterback in the NFL, nor the most athletic. His arm isn't the strongest, and he's by no means a paragon of accuracy. But, during this offseason, this delightfully underwhelming superstar will be one of the league's most coveted players.

Sure, his Philadelphia Eagles fell short in their bid for back-to-back Super Bowl titles this year. And, yeah, he does look a little like Napoleon Dynamite. But Foles is among the most clutch quarterbacks in the game right now.

"Big Dick Nick" became the patron saint of Philadelphia sports in 2018 when he improbably led the underdog Eagles to the first Super Bowl victory in the franchise's 85-year history. While this win alone cemented his legacy as a local legend, it was the circumstances in which he won, and his track record since, that makes him this issue's Man of the Moment.

Drafted by the Eagles in 2012, Foles leapt to prominence quickly, getting a Pro Bowl nod in only his second year in the

league with a record-setting season. But his meteoric rise gave way to an equally rapid fall from grace.

In 2015, Foles was traded to the Los Angeles Rams, where he suffered serious setbacks and was quickly relegated to the bench. Unsatisfied with his role, Foles eventually agreed to part ways with the team the next season and, at one point, reportedly, seriously considered retiring to focus on becoming a pastor.

Really.

Foles ultimately decided against early retirement and, after a short stint with the Kansas City Chiefs, found his way back to Philly, where he took up the mantle as a backup QB for rising star Carson Wentz, in his second season.

Wentz was a stud that year, in 2017, and led the team to a 10-2 record before suffering a season-ending injury in Week 14. Fans grieved the loss of Wentz, the heart and soul of the team, and analysts laid to rest any hope of a Philadelphia championship.

But Foles, like a phoenix rising from the ashes, took the reins of the offense and never looked back, upsetting team after team until he valiantly conquered the perennial Super Bowl contender New England Patriots.

However, not even a Super Bowl MVP award could keep Foles from being benched when Carson Wentz was cleared to play in Week 3 of this season. Ten weeks later, the Eagles were 6-7 and looking like a long shot to make the playoffs when Wentz was sidelined with a back injury.

Again, pundits and fans alike wrote off the Eagles. And, again, Foles proved the public wrong.

In his first game back as the starter, Foles led the team to an upset victory over the Los Angeles Rams and sparked a late-season run that helped the Eagles make the playoffs. Against all odds, the Foles-led side then went on to unseat the heavy-favorite Chicago Bears in the Wild Card round.

With Foles at the helm, the Eagles suddenly looked like the team of destiny. So, when Philadelphia was down six points to the heavily favored New Orleans Saints with only two minutes left in their Divisional Round game a week later, it seemed obvious that Foles would somehow manufacture a way to snatch victory from the jaws of defeat.

And the apotheosis of Saint Nick seemed on the verge of completion, too, until a promising drive down the field ended when a pass careened off the hands of an open receiver and landed in the hands of a Saints defender, effectively ending the game and, likely, Foles' time in Philly.

"I can't say enough good things about Nick. To do the things he's done the last two years, like I said I can't thank him enough. He's a pro's pro. He's a great human being. He'll always be remembered in Philadelphia for bringing a Super Bowl," said head coach Doug Pederson in a radio interview on 94WIP, a local Philadelphia radio station, following the loss.

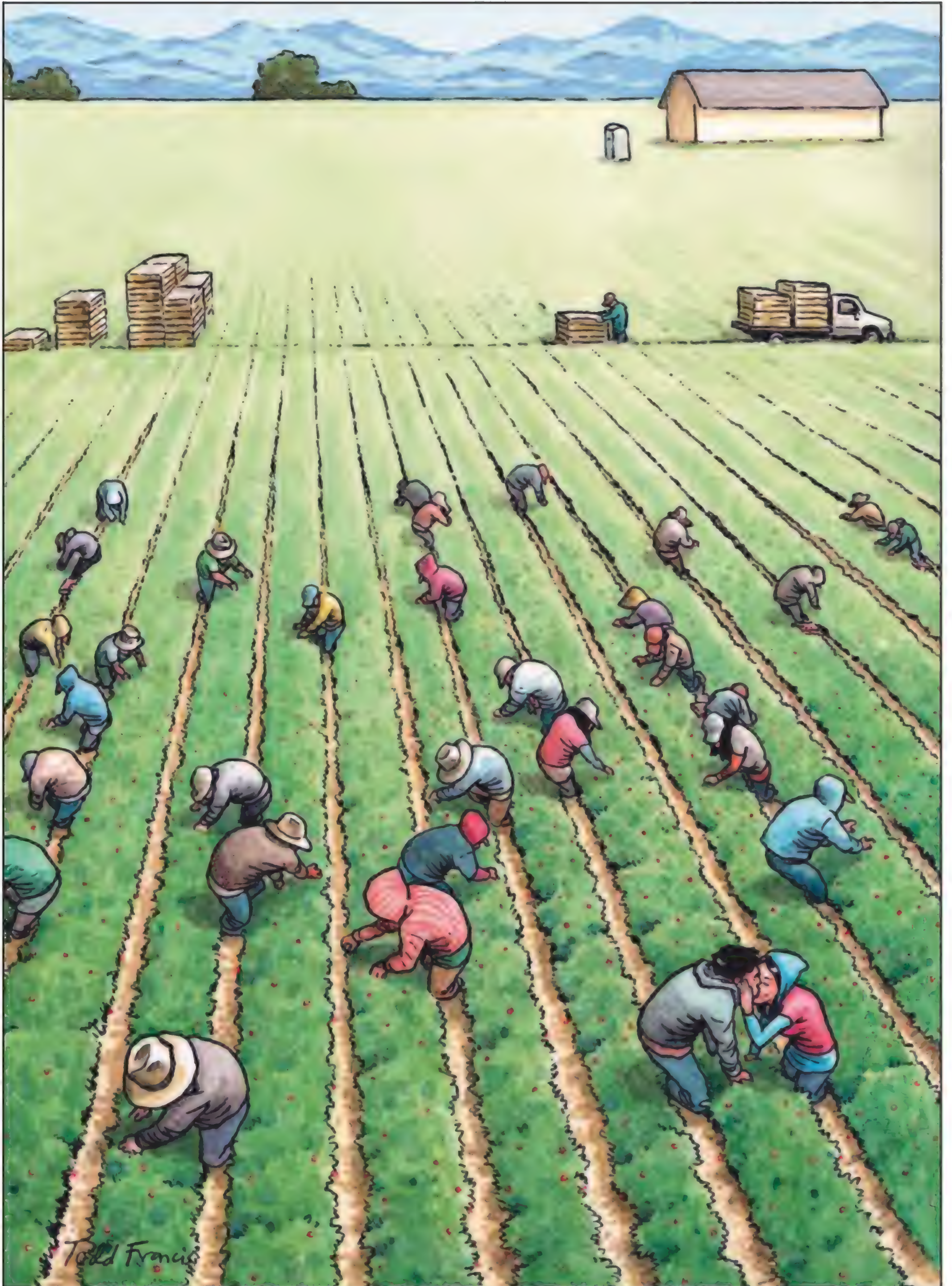
We may not know where Foles will land next season, but what is certain is Foles' legacy in the City of Brotherly Love.

The organization has already showed their appreciation for the 30-year-old veteran by paying him a \$1-million bonus, despite the fact the quarterback fell a few snaps short of meeting the requirements of an incentive deal that would trigger the windfall.

But we'd argue that Philadelphia, as a whole, could, and should, go a step further.

The city already contains memorials for sports greats like Wilt "The Stilt" Chamberlain, Steve "Lefty" Carlton, and Julius "Dr. J" Erving. Shit, one of its most memorable landmarks is a statue of *fictional* sports legend Rocky Balboa.

But until this most unlikely hero is inducted into the pantheon of Philly greats and granted a monument, our Man of the Moment award (and the cool million he just made) will have to suffice. 



CRUSH

JAMIE LEE

INTERVIEW BY ALEXANDER BISLEY



PHOTO BY STEVEN GERLICH

2019 is shaping up to be an exciting year for actress/writer/comedian Jamie Lee. Season three of the Pete Holmes/Judd Apatow HBO series *Crashing* premiered in January, starring Lee as Ali Reissen, a sassy New York City stand-up. She's also appearing in another HBO comedy hit, *2 Dope Queens*. We caught up with the 35-year-old comedian by phone to discuss her evolving role on *Crashing*, her hometown of Dallas, and why she refused to be a goat on her wedding day.

Your 2017 debut comedy album, *I Mean...*, features hilarious riffs on hookups, tying the knot, and rough sex. Does stand-up still give you a safe space to navigate the dark corners of your brain?

Without comedy I might not have an outlet for exploring my dark side, and I feel very grateful to be able to do it. I mean, other types of writing and performing are really satisfying, but stand-up is kind of a catchall that lets you write and perform and sort of say whatever you want. And connect with people over ideas that maybe they've thought, but didn't have the confidence to articulate.

The flaws that I see within myself, when I put them through the filter of comedy, I only appreciate more. I start to view them not as flaws, but as things that define me. What's important about stand-up is that it takes the things you might deem bad or complicated and makes them kind of hilarious and beautiful.

In season three, episode four, of *Crashing*, you take on the obnoxious and overrated comedian/club owner Jason (Dov Davidoff). Was there catharsis in that?

My character, Ali, is dealing with this headliner who says whatever he wants, and thinks that makes him edgy and important. Ali proceeds to stand it up as a lot of totally off fluff. It was really thrilling to be able to portray a comedian who was taking a stand, and standing up to him.

One of the things I like about Ali is that she's subverting people's stale notions of female comics.

It's really important to have this depiction of a girl stand-up on TV right now. We're obviously living in a pretty complicated climate where a lot of people are putting close eyes on these issues of sexism and sexual harassment and being "woke." Episode four does a really good job of tackling all of those things, and in a pretty realistic way.

I think my favorite moment would be the parking-lot scene at the end. Jason was provoked to come at me. Ali probably wouldn't give him the time of day otherwise, but because he was attacking her directly, she really let him have it.

You've said that episode six, which you wrote yourself, is your favorite.

Yes. The episode is very relatable to me in my own life because when you do a stand-up set on a late-night TV show for the first time, you have a lot of friends who want to make a party out of it. As a comedian, there's part of you that's really proud of yourself. But there's also a part of you that has a lot of shame and you have a kind of fraud syndrome, and you feel a little embarrassed because there's so much attention on you.

What's your advice to emerging female comedians?

The advice I wish I could have given myself is to try and tune out the noise as much as possible. Try to focus on yourself and remind yourself that you are just as worthy of this pursuit as anyone else. All of that sort of positive self-

talk is really helpful, because it's a really formative time in your life, and in your comedy life. Be a kind voice in your head because, at the end of the day, only you can motivate yourself to keep going.

What do you do for balance?

I recently got into working out pretty intensely. I was not an athletic kid at all. I did not play sports. I could barely run without getting winded. And then, within the last two years, I got a personal trainer and she really kicked my ass. I leave there being like, *Oh, I guess I am capable of moving my body.*

You live in L.A. now. Do you miss your home state of Texas?

I do. When I was a teenager in Dallas, I thought it was a little boring, but there's this area of Dallas called Deep Ellum, which has a lot of really cool music venues. Now every time I go back, there's a new cool neighborhood to discover. In parts of Dallas where there was no population, [there are all these] really cool bars and restaurants. So yeah, it's really changed a lot since I've lived there. Now when I go back I'm like, *Ooh, it could be fun to live here.* I wish that L.A. would up and move to Dallas.

Any imminent projects you can tell us about?

I just closed a development deal with [the channel] Freeform for a show called *The Girlfriend*. I wrote the show on my own and it would be for me to star in. It's about a girl who finds out she might be dating a murderer. It's sort of a female *Breaking Bad*. I also wrote a book about planning a wedding and modern-day wedding culture [called *Weddiculous*], and we're working on turning it into a TV series.

It's cool that marriage is increasingly egalitarian and inclusive. Your zinger "[My father] is not giving me away, because I'm not a fucking goat" makes me laugh.

For my wedding, there were definitely some traditions we adhered to and then others that we were like, "That's just not for us," which I think is what everybody should do. We didn't do the father-daughter giveaway. I think that we're in a space right now where everyone wants to be talking about it more openly and honestly, and challenging some of these things that we were force-fed to be true. And they're just not.

As this is *Penthouse*, what does being sex-positive mean to you?

Sex-positive means to each his own, not judgmental of one person's sexuality or sexual dispositions. I feel like I fall into that category. I think the more open we are about sex and sexuality, the less alone we all feel. 

Alexander Bisley's previous Penthouse interview was with sex columnist Dan Savage. He has also interviewed John Kerry, Rose Byrne, and Rashida Jones.

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT

TOM CLANCY'S THE DIVISION 2

UBISOFT (PS4, XBOX ONE, PC)

A S if Washington, D.C., wasn't swampy enough, *The Division 2* depicts the district's monumental landmarks flooded by storms and on the brink of collapse seven months after the first game's deadly virus ravaged New York City. If the nation's capital is lost, the rest of the country will follow, so once again, it's up to the player to storm the city and restore order as a member of the Division, an organization of sleeper agents posing as ordinary Joes until they're needed in a crisis.

The Division 2 is a shoot-and-loot game set in an urban jungle with lots of room to roam and raid. Washington,

D.C., is recreated on a one-to-one scale, right down to the neighborhoods and landmarks, as well as day/night cycles and weather conditions that affect the firefights. The city is terrorized by petty thugs and organized factions, such as the paramilitary "True Sons" who rely on their military training and raw firepower to expand their territory. You can play solo in the story mode or take on other Division agents in player-versus-player modes.

But the best way to play is cooperatively, teaming up with other Division agents online and upgrading your combat abilities to push back against the chaos. You can customize your weapons, tool sets, and

skills to bolster your preferred play style and show off to your allies. Launch homing mines at enemies or send in assault drones to create a diversion. Take shelter in walk-ups, museums, and monuments as you battle across the metro D.C. area.

This won't be a brief struggle. *The Division's* makers have pumped up the endgame so it will go on and on, like similar titles such as *Destiny 2*. Reach level 30 and you can choose new specializations, such as demolitionist or survivalist, then wield exotic weapon sets that will make the greenhorn players whine until you headshot them from the peak of the Washington Monument. 

TO BE CONTINUED: ESSENTIAL EXPANSIONS FOR LAST YEAR'S EPICS

JUST CAUSE 4

(SQUARE ENIX, XBOX ONE, PS4, PC)

The anything-goes gameplay of this revolutionary wargame gets even more insane in a three-pack of post-release chapters, each focused on a different type of chaos. The *Dare Devils* pack deals out combat racing for higher stakes than just pink slips. The *Demons* pack introduces supernatural spookiness. The third pack, *Danger*, unlocks an exotic payload of secret weapons and unpredictable technology.



CALL OF DUTY: BLACK OPS 4

(ACTIVISION, PS4, XBOX ONE, PC)

Every past *Black Ops* game has livened up the battlefield with a downloadable undead experience post-release. This newest installment, called *Dead of Night*, is downright outlandish—and celebrity-studded. Set in 1912, it stars Kiefer Sutherland, Helena Bonham Carter, and others as monster-hunting adventurers defending a posh estate from an onslaught of the undead, vampires, and werewolves.



MARVEL'S SPIDER-MAN

(SONY INTERACTIVE ENTERTAINMENT, PS4)

As if our favorite web-slinger didn't have enough headaches dealing with the society of Spidey villains in last year's comic-book masterpiece, developer Insomniac has released a three-chapter follow-up that packs a full game's worth of plot twists. Called *The City That Never Sleeps*, it introduces foes-with-benefits Black Cat and Silver Sable to complicate Peter Parker's personal life.



RED DEAD REDEMPTION 2

ONLINE
(ROCKSTAR GAMES, PS4, XBOX ONE)

If you've finally tamed the Wild West of last year's most epic adventure, don't put your horse out to pasture just yet. This new online mode lets you squad up with fellow cowpokes and cooperate in new outlaw missions, dig up treasure, or have a good old-fashioned brodown as you hunt and fish. See how long that lasts before you draw your iron and sling lead in all sorts of shootout modes.



THE FUTURE? *By James Silk*

PLANET OF THE APPS



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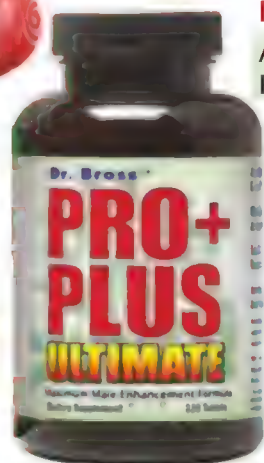


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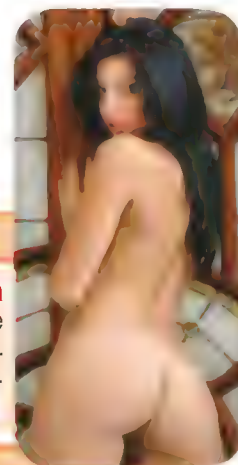
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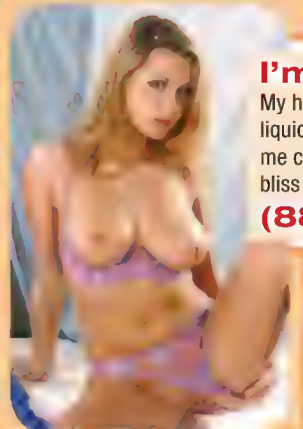
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STICKY SITUATION

The Great Molasses Flood of 1919 stopped Boston in its tracks.

BY MICHAEL HINGSTON

THIS past December, a town in Germany made international headlines when a local chocolate factory's storage tank ruptured, literally repaving the streets with a layer of chocolatey goo so thick it took 25 firefighters armed with shovels, blowtorches, and hot water to chip it all away.

The story was a funny little curio, to be sure. But for fans of weird history, it also couldn't help but bring to mind one of the oddest and most infamous events of food-related disaster on record: the Great Molasses Flood of 1919. And since I haven't covered it in these pages yet—and also because it just celebrated (if that's the right word, which it isn't) its centenary in January—now feels like as good a time as any to dive back in and get reacquainted.

The date is January 15, 1919. The scene: the North End neighborhood in Boston. There, by the harbor, sits a massive, 90-foot-wide tank capable of holding more than two million gallons of molasses, which at the time was being imported from the Caribbean to be distilled into rum and ethanol. But this was no ordinary molasses tank. No, this tank was an *incredibly shoddy* molasses tank. It was built a few years earlier for the nearby Purity Distilling Company, but for some reason was never properly tested, and problems were evident early on. For one, the tank had a leak so bad that local kids figured out they could bring over empty cans and scoop up the dregs for free. When notified of this issue, the project manager responded by having the tank painted a molasses-y shade of brown, so that the leaks would be harder to see.

On that fateful January afternoon, the gigantic tank, full nearly to the brim after a recent deposit, split open for good.

"A dull, muffled roar gave but an instant's warning before the top of the tank was blown in the air," wrote the *New York Times* the following day. And the ensuing wave of molasses that flooded the streets of Boston was nothing short of surreal. Eyewitnesses estimated the wave was between 8 and 15 feet high, and it moved at 35 miles per hour—in every direction. In a matter of seconds, two full city blocks were submerged.

The explosion devastated the surrounding area. The gooey

wave moved so quickly it caught bystanders before they were able to get to higher ground. Even when the molasses leveled off at about knee height, cooling in the winter temperatures, it was still so sticky that people couldn't escape easily.

"Here and there struggled a form," wrote the *Boston Globe*, "whether it was animal or human being was impossible to tell." Meanwhile, the force of the explosion itself toppled several buildings and destroyed a chunk of an elevated rail line shortly after the train had passed over it. In all, 21 people were killed, and another 150 were seriously injured. The last victim wasn't found for more than 10 days.

After an inquiry that lasted three years, an auditor found that the tank wasn't built to construction standards, and for a long time, it was assumed that the rivets were to blame, in

conjunction with a dangerous buildup of carbon dioxide inside the tank. More recently, however, a local engineer, who studies the flood as a hobby, found the type of steel used in the tank was, in fact, the main culprit.

While not considered a risk at the time, engineers now know that this kind of steel is too brittle, and therefore more likely to crack under duress. In this case, the steel was also only half as thick as it should have been, given how much

liquid the tank was meant to hold. This same steel was also used in the construction of the *Titanic*, which is not generally a comparison anyone wants to be part of.

Following the inquiry, the company that owned the tank, U.S. Industrial Alcohol, was forced to pay \$600,000 (roughly \$6.5 million by today's standards) in settlements. Cleanup in the surrounding blocks took weeks, and far longer in all of the outlying areas and corners to which the molasses ultimately spread. And once the streets were officially scrubbed clean of the deadly, sticky mess, reports persisted of the smell of molasses in central Boston for decades afterwards.

"A DULL, MUFFLED ROAR GAVE BUT AN INSTANT'S WARNING," WROTE THE NEW YORK TIMES. AND THE ENSUING WAVE OF MOLASSES THAT FLOODED THE STREETS OF BOSTON WAS NOTHING SHORT OF SURREAL.

Michael Hingston is a writer in Edmonton, Alberta, Canada. His new book is "Let's Go Exploring," a history and analysis of the comic strip Calvin and Hobbes.



THE VAULT

BRIGITTE MAIER
July 1974



NATURAL WOMAN

"I think that if you are looking at a woman's anatomy, it must be beautiful in all of its parts," said our founder Bob Guccione while on a talk show in the early eighties. "We cannot take one part of the anatomy and say that this is vulgar or obscene, and that the rest of it is decent. That just simply doesn't work." Guccione was famous for his love for the whole woman, in all her natural beauty, and we happily carry his torch.

MICHELLE WALKER
March 1986



SAMI MITCHELTREE
August 1978

DINA FERRARO
December 1977



JERI LEE
January 1977





SAMANTHA FAYE
July 1980



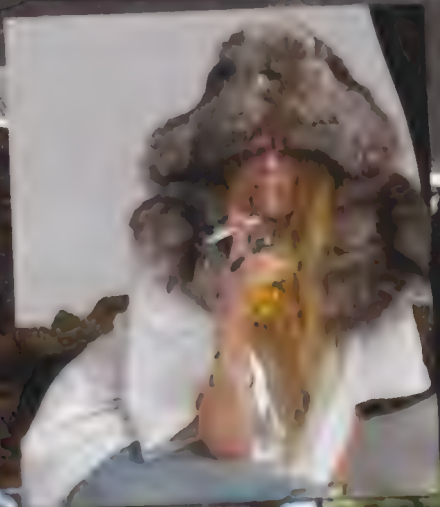
DEBORAH CLEARBRANCH
June 1974

JEANNIE BUTLER
April 1979



BARBARA CORSER
August 1977





ICONOCLAST

With her band Royal Trux reunited, rebel rocker and fashion pioneer Jennifer Herrema is poised to expand her dominion.

BY MILES RAYMER

outer space. It
upon
a better thought
kazillion radio fl
Yeah,
true for me and Janet Ja
A rock
screwing back in
THC-laced dreams. Easy enough

DON'T want to be a rock star," says Jennifer Herrema, America's greatest living rock star.

And what is a rock star these days, really? The term's been degraded and neutered with overuse, its totemic influence sapped by rock's downfall from the position of power it held in global pop culture for half a century.

"Rock star" is a compliment issued in a human resources manager's email. It's a line in a rap song. It's a guy buying a \$900 John Varvatos biker jacket where the punk club CBGB used to be.

"Honestly, it's a term of privilege," Herrema continues, a twinge of exasperated disdain rising in her voice to join the raspy evidence of a million cigarettes. "Like someone saying, 'You're a rock star' to the head coach of a pro football team or something. It's this thing to bestow upon people who don't play music. That always seemed so cheesy to me."

Herrema's contempt for the term—her refusal to act overly reverential toward rock 'n' roll in general—is, of course, just more reason to consider her a rock star.

Musicians trying to uphold rock's crumbling mythological stature have a way of looking desperate and, sadly, it's become almost the default mode for an entire generation of rock 'n' rollers living in a world that's moved on to hip-hop and dance music. (It's worth noting that Herrema was one of the few rock musicians in the nineties who seemed comfortable around rap music.)

Herrema has spent her career—pretty much her whole life, really—making scuzzy, druggy, capital letter Rock 'n' Fucking Roll that taps into something close to the genre's beating, molten heart. It's music that's never been affected by trends, never been tailored to a particular audience, and never strayed from her artistic vision, which she shares on

a deep level with Neil Michael Hagerty, her longtime creative (and one-time romantic) partner in her best-known—or maybe just most notorious—band, Royal Trux.

At times, when rock 'n' roll's drifted furthest from its core, it's seemed like Jennifer Herrema is one of the few people on Earth keeping it from spinning out entirely.

Times like right now, for instance. The genre's in sorry shape, with its mainstream aspect defined by monumentally banal arena acts like Imagine Dragons and Muse, and an underground crawling with bands that would rather dig around for obscure nuggets of rock history to revive than come up with a new idea.

To rock fans desperate for a real kick, the new Royal Trux album, *White Stuff*—the band's first release in nearly 20 years following a Harrema-Hagerty reunion—registers like a glitter-caked weirdo stumbling into a polite discussion about which boutique overdrive pedal best replicates the guitar sound on a particular obscure New Zealand punk album from the seventies. *White Stuff* is the reason why we haven't walked out on rock 'n' roll altogether.

For her years of service, Herrema has been repaid with three decades of frowning reviews, audiences perplexed to the point of outrage, and a lifetime number of albums sold that the next Drake single will probably blow past in the first couple minutes it's available.

If you're like most people, you've never heard a Royal Trux song, never seen a Royal Trux T-shirt, or ever heard of Herrema before you started reading this article. But none of that matters in assessing her worthiness as America's greatest living rock star. Moreover, music popularity—fame and the money that comes with it—never seemed to matter to her anyway.

"Neil and I always felt out of place," she says, shrugging. "It's not like it really bummed us out. There was just kinda this wall we were behind and we didn't even understand how you get over there where all the normal people were. So we didn't bother to try. We didn't get the playbook or something. We decided to be happy with the way we called our own shots."

One of the many ironies of Herrema's career is that her entire body of work has been built on an utterly unironic embrace of cock-rock sounds and styles like the Rolling Stones' smacked-out, early-seventies boogie and the cocaine-shiny bubblegum metal of the 1980s Sunset Strip, but has found most of its audience in the world of indie rock. And this is a world—which she fell into mostly by accident—that has a painfully complicated relationship with that kind of big, testosterone-fueled rock music and the dick-swinging hedonism it symbolized.



JENNIFER Herrema's musical education began when she was a white girl in a majority-black middle school in funk-obsessed southeast Washington, D.C., during funk's transition from the goeey, warm lysergic vibes of Parliament-Funkadelic into its more hard-edged, synthesized 1980s incarnation.

In high school, she fell in with a stoner crowd that used drugs primarily as a means to more deeply obsess over Led Zeppelin and Grateful Dead records. Somewhere in between, her dad started dropping her off at all-ages D.C. hardcore shows, where she found Neil Michael Hagerty and her musical destiny.

Hagerty was connected enough in the hardcore scene to play guitar in a band with one of the guys from Government Issue, a seminal D.C. punk band, but too genuinely weird to fit in with this subculture's fairly rigorous social norms. While other D.C. hardcore kids were into political protest and a drug-free, "straight edge" lifestyle, Hagerty was living in a warehouse and dropping huge amounts of acid. One day, Herrema joined him for a three-day acid trip, and they ended up spending the next 15 years bound to each other by love, music, and drugs.

Herrema and Hagerty began making their first music together, laying down the foundation for Royal Trux, in the mid-eighties. At the same time, other former hardcore kids were starting to explore musical directions outside of the genre's "loud fast" directives while keeping its DIY ethos, in the process creating what came to be known as indie rock.

Hagerty was recruited by one of the early indie scene's most notorious acts, Pussy Galore, a sneeringly primitivist noise-rock band that flouted hardcore's political correctness with outrageously objectionable song titles like "You Look Like a Jew." Hagerty cemented the group's reputation, and earned a well-deserved place in rock history, when he proposed the concept behind their masterwork, an album-length cover of the Stones' *Exile on Main St.* that brilliantly set fire to rock music's legacy and pissed on its ashes.

After Pussy Galore somewhat predictably self-destructed, Hagerty and Herrema started work on their Royal Trux songwriting in earnest. And as soon as their music got out there, people struggled to categorize it, or even understand what they were doing.

The era's underground music scene was full of bands deconstructing rock in all kinds of clever ways, but no one went further with the enterprise than Hagerty and Herrema.

They tore seventies boogie rock to shreds until all that was left was a few skeletal riffs, some primordial howling, and a heavily narcotic contact high. It was a singular approach—idiosyncratic to the point of indecipherability for most listeners. The few fans they did have tended to be music critics and owners of small, taste-making record labels.

Their live shows were so shambolic they even managed to affront punk-weened audiences who considered amateurishness a virtue. Around the time of their first album, Gerard Cosloy, the indie-music visionary and Homestead Records exec, described Royal Trux as people who are "barely able to conduct daily order of affairs, whether it's buying a newspaper or picking up the telephone, trying to be a rock band onstage." Still, he found them "really exciting"—more stimulating than Sonic Youth. It was probably the highest praise they received in that era.



HERREMA and Hagerty weren't trolls, but in pursuit of their art they managed to alienate huge swaths of the underground scene. Indie rock fans were offended by their aggressively esoteric noise, their openness about the heroin habits they'd developed, and the air of celebrity and salaciousness that clung to the breathless fanzine and alt-weekly coverage of this scruffily photogenic couple's thunderous records and narcotics use.

Royal Trux was widely accused of making pretentious, cryptic bullshit, when in fact they were always straight-up

"WITH ROYAL TRUX, OUR M.O.
WAS ALWAYS INCLUSIVITY.
WE DIDN'T CARE WHO YOU
WERE, WHERE YOU WERE
FROM. WE DIDN'T EVEN CARE
IF THE ONLY BAND YOU
EVER LISTENED TO WAS THE
PARTRIDGE FAMILY."

about who they were or what they were doing—two people who loved drugs and the Rolling Stones, and wanted to make druggy, Stonesy music.

They may have once been the go-to band for anyone looking to mock indie-music snobs—those connoisseurs of underground sounds who claimed to like, and sometimes actually did like, Royal Trux—but Herrema insists they themselves did not fetishize obscurity.

“Back in the day, indie music was very exclusive and [some of the bands] would try to only have a certain kind of fan,” Herrema remembers. “With Royal Trux, our M.O. was always inclusivity. We didn’t care who you were, where you were from. We didn’t even care if the only band you ever listened to was the Partridge Family.”

After taking reams of criticism for being unlistenable, Herrema and Hagerty managed to piss off a lot of the same people when they started writing songs with recognizable pop structures and hooks on their 1993 breakthrough, *Cats and Dogs*.

That was followed, in 1994, by Virgin Records signing them to a million-dollar deal, which some observers smirkingly viewed as proof that the major label’s alternative-rock buying spree had reached a new summit of bad decision-making, reckless spending, and unchecked greed. If these two flagrant junkies could get a record contract of that size, the thinking went, then this looking-for-the-next-Nirvana bubble had to be close to bursting.

The deal did turn out to be a disaster for Virgin, but not for the reasons everyone expected.

Instead of simply running off and shooting up their recording budget, Herrema and Hagerty used it to buy a large house in rural Virginia, equip it with a home studio, and get clean, while starting work on three of the most fractured-genius rock albums of the alt-rock era.

By the time they set out to make 1995’s *Thank You*, the pair turned from deconstructing rock ‘n’ roll to its bones to rebuilding it into a Frankenstein monster of clashing essences—canonical “Serious Rock” like Neil Young and *Exile*-era Stones colliding with the kind of squealing synthesizer prog-rock and high-gloss glam metal that can make critics cringe. The Trilogy, as Herrema-Hagerty called the work Virgin bankrolled, forms a multi-album masterpiece.

Unfortunately for Virgin, the records didn’t make sense to many people outside the band, and the label had no idea how to sell them. To complicate matters, Hagerty and Herrema had no interest in being marketed, and since they had complete creative control written into their contracts, they could veto any of the label’s attempts to make them do boring, profitable things like shoot music videos or tour overseas. The fact that it would be 20 or so years before audiences were truly ready for Royal Trux didn’t help the recording giant at all.

Label execs eventually threw up their hands and let Herrema and Hagerty walk away with the Trilogy’s final album, *Accelerator*, which they recorded on Virgin’s dime and released through their old Chicago-based indie label, Drag City. Unlike the majority of bands that got caught up in the alt-rock buying spree, Herrema and Hagerty emerged from their major-label period in better financial shape than when they went in, but the stress of years of intense creative and romantic codependency, compounded by their famously ferocious drug habits, eventually overwhelmed them. Herrema’s crisis deepened after the death of her father. Amid rumors of relapses and rivalry, the band dissolved in early 2001.



KOMPL AINT
DEPT.



QUEEN



Looking back at that difficult juncture, and to earlier years with her band and even before then, Herrema says, "Drugs have really had a big impact on my life. All kinds of them."



A FRIEND'S older sister turned her on to weed when Herrema was 12. Alcohol and acid followed. When she got into heroin, she got into it deep, developing the kind of rapacious addiction where the user deals with abscessed veins and doctors talk about amputating fingers—the kind of habit that's just the thinnest of veils for suicide.

"It's like, which came first?" Herrema reflects. "The chicken or the egg? Were you clinically depressed or did you just do a lot of drugs and then got into a dark space?"

Eventually, antidepressants helped Herrema find stability and stay off smack. Meanwhile, the dissolution of Royal Trux gave her an opportunity to prove that she was more than just her partnership with Hagerty. While he went off to explore the shamanic frequencies of his next project, Howling Hex, Herrema continued refining her trash-rock vision with a new creative partner, Jaimo Welch.

"He was like 17 at the time," Herrema recalls, "and all he really listened to was Rush and White Lion."

With their duo RTX (which later evolved into a bigger band, Black Bananas, the only traditionally structured rock combo Herrema's been in), they used digital production techniques to make her music even more ecstatically trashy and overwhelming.

Somewhere along the way, people started giving Herrema something at least approximating the credit she deserves. Recognition also came from a huge wave of new fans that found her through fashion. As with her becoming a rock star, Herrema never specifically set out to be a style icon, but she's excelled at it nonetheless.

In the nineties, she perfected a look that—like her music—blended a bunch of seemingly unrelated cultural signifiers: tattered rock 'n' roller bell-bottoms, truck-stop aviator sunglasses, ratty flannels, oversized Raider jerseys redolent of the era's gangsta rap aesthetics, and a shaggy mess of blonde hair with long bangs that conjured a 1960s go-go girl gone feral.

Her style seemed thrown together for reasons that had little to do with how its components met the eye. For example, there was that huge parka with a fur-lined hood she seemed perpetually wrapped in, no matter what she was doing or the time of year.

"Basically, I wanted to be inside of myself," Herrema explains. "So I kind of cocooned myself and put on shades and my hood and had my hair [that way], so I was like basically in my own world."

Back in the day, her signature underground style earned her a spot in a Calvin Klein ad campaign shot by the legendary fashion photographer Steven Meisel. Herrema was the company's first model for an iconic, mid-nineties look that came to be called "heroin chic."

But her biggest fan base didn't emerge until internet sites like Tumblr took hold, which elevated her postmodern look and appreciation for clothes sourced far from a fashion

runway—Herrema once told *Vogue* magazine her favorite place to shop was Sports Authority—into something like a sartorial philosophy.

She's had gigs designing jeans for skate-surf brand Volcom, and modeled and designed for Japan's Hysteric Glamour (Sofia Coppola shot one of the ads). But her biggest mark on fashion comes through appreciation posts collecting her most iconic looks, since these images propagate online, creating new members of a growing Jennifer Herrema fashion cult.



ROYAL Trux is far from the first pioneering indie group to reunite years after the fact, once the rest of the world has caught up to them. But since Herrema is terminally averse to nostalgia and repetition, her reunion with Neil Hagerty feels less like the usual sentimental victory lap and more like returning to a path they'd each wandered away from for a while.

"I played the White Rabbit in *Alice in Wonderland* when I was a kid at school," she remembers, while discussing her dislike of repetition. "I had to do the same lines every weekend for three months. I was like, *This is so fucking boring.*"

Though rock 'n' roll might be suffering these days, it's an art form that thrives on unexpected comebacks. It's been declared dead dozens of times before and has always sprung back. Herrema knows that the ideas Royal Trux put out into the world—do things your way at all costs, make treasures out of other people's trash, never back down—have taken root in the hearts and minds of a new generation of artists. And you can't discount the idea that a new Royal Trux album could catalyze a reaction that'll launch a thousand scuzzy rock bands and jolt the genre back to life—at least for a minute or two.

But one thing you learn in recovery is to recognize when a problem is somebody else's to deal with, not yours, and Herrema's quite reasonably decided that the future of rock 'n' roll is somebody else's problem. Besides, the reckless, anarchic spirit that rock used to overflow with—that energy she's been chasing her entire time on Earth—is alive and well in other parts of the pop world. Take, for example, the wave of young rappers who have used internet savvy to upend the music business, to Herrema's clear delight.

Her favorite example of this is a rapper she read about who hired a hacker to briefly make him the No. 1 artist on SoundCloud, until the platform noticed and ended the rebel takeover.

"Everything blew up and it got shut right down," Herrema says admiringly. "But that's all it took—like an hour—for him to be at the top spot and cause all this hullabaloo." The underground music and fashion icon smiles. "I like that kind of uneven playing-field thing," she says. "You can find your own ways through the nooks and crannies." 

Miles Raymer is an artist and writer living in New York City.

FICTION

Menu Change

BY JOE DEROSA

WAIT a minute. Wait. Stop walking for a second and think about this. Sit. Think.

In 30-plus years of operation, Harley's Grill, in the town of 500 where John grew up, had never served anything more elegant than a rack of ribs. Yet today they were advertising "Chilean Sea Bass With Orange Mango White Wine Reduction."

It was written in that ugly teal marker they always used to post specials on their dry-erase sandwich board out front. The same putrid blue as always, except this time it alerted customers to a fancy seafood dish instead of turkey burgers and chicken tenders.

They even spelled all the words right. That alone was suspicious.

John remembered the time Harley's tried to raise money for the local Catholic church with a hot dog stunt. "Fundraser for Saint Margaret's—Frankferter Eating Contest." He'd laughed about that for weeks. So how the hell did they manage to spell Chilean Sea Bass, etc., correctly? Where'd they even learn to *make* this recipe? Mango? The most exotic fruit in that sweatbox kitchen of theirs was maraschino cherries.

Then there was the fish itself.

Wald, Oklahoma, was a hundred miles from anything bigger than a muddy pond, and who knows how far from the ocean. There was no way in hell that Harley's Grill—home of buzzing black flies and a faint, lingering smell of urine—was suddenly paying to have quality seafood shipped in.

Something wasn't right. Other things were off, too. Any one of them on its own would have been peculiar, but all of them combined? John thought of what his dad had said after he'd gotten home, taken his luggage up to the spare room, made small talk, and started out the door for lunch. "Don't be gone too long, man," his dad said.

It was the way he said the last word. He didn't say "man" the normal way people do, when punctuating a thought. "Sure is hot, man." Or, "What are you talking about, man?" He said it like he was identifying what kind of creature his son was. "Don't be gone too long, you *man*." You human being. You member of the *Homo sapiens* species.

And what about the way his dad had hugged John when he arrived? Granted, he hadn't seen his old man for a year and a half, but this was the first time he'd ever hugged him as an adult. Come to think of it, the last time he could remember getting a hug from his dad was when tonsillitis gave him a dangerously high fever as a kid.

During his last visit home, his dad had barely seemed to want him there. Now he was worried about a few extra minutes at lunch?

Dusty hadn't barked when John rang the bell. Normally, that damn dog went bananas. Normally, he wanted to strangle the hyperactive Jack Russell. It yapped when the mailman arrived. It yapped if another pooch got within a block of the house. It was a "watchdog" set off by nothing, and it didn't watch much either, unless you counted three-year-old *Car and Driver* magazines and his dad's low-definition flat-screen.

This time Dusty was silent as a snowy field. Why?



WHEN John got to Birch Street, Pizzeria-Pizzeria was gone. Like Harley's Grill, it had been there forever—his entire life. His dad loved the place. He'd eaten there twice a week for years. How come he hadn't mentioned its demise?

True, John called it a dump once and told his dad you could get better pizza and garlic bread pretty much anywhere. But his old man never missed a chance to report that something, anything, had happened in Wald. "Remember Mr. Goddard? Well, he just



WALD NEIGHBORHOOD PHOTOGRAPH BY JEFFREY M. HARRIS

traded in his Skylark for a Camry,” his dad made a point of telling John once. Another time, he said, “The furnace broke at the library and now they have a mobile one on a flatbed out back of the building heating the place. Quite a sight.”

But not a word about Pizzeria-Pizzeria?

Then there was Mrs. Dumbrowski. Two minutes earlier he walked past her on Trail Street and she barely said hello. When he’d first seen her down the block, he nearly did a 180 and ran. He’d always had this urge. Even at age seven, he wanted to tell Mrs. Dumbrowski to shut her yap. She could chew the ears of a chocolate bunny and then gossip to it for an hour. Her amplified blabbing would drive a barricaded guy out of his house. Her perfume could wake a hibernating grizzly bear. Instead of smelling salts, boxing cornermen could use her fragrance on dazed boxers between rounds.

But when they ran into each other on the sidewalk, she barely looked at him. Walking at a slow, steady pace, head forward, Mrs. Dumbrowski muttered, “John,” and that was it. For the first time in her life, she didn’t stop to gossip.

It was John who stopped. He stood there watching Mrs. Dumbrowski continue down Trail Street. Maybe she’d finally figured him out, he thought. Maybe others in his hometown had figured him out, too. John was a guy who looked at Wald as a prison. A guy who considered the people who lived here too dumb to devise their own escape plans. Maybe the citizens of his hometown were collectively thinking, *We don’t give a shit if you want nothing to do with us, John. We want nothing to do with you. We don’t need you. We can do our own fancy, big-city-type stuff, and that includes Chilean Sea Bass With Orange Mango White Wine Reduction. Out with the pizza, in with three-star cuisine.*

But seriously, what the hell was going on?



HOW about aliens? Maybe they took over the town, like an *Outer Limits* episode. It could happen in a town like this. These kinds of people never see it coming. They’re too oblivious. They live inside such a bubble they barely pause to consider the existence of human beings outside their podunk hamlet, let alone the existence of otherworldly beings. Hell, he’d bet money an intergalactic army would instantly move on if they ever landed in Wald. Any self-respecting, shape-shifting alien would be too embarrassed to wear the skins of these hicks. It’d be like Cleopatra donning a dress she bought at Target.

Too pathetic to be colonized—that was Wald. God forbid anything dramatic happen to this place. An alien takeover would be great. Or a parasite infecting the brains of the townsfolk, making them pawns in an evil plot—and, finally, halfway interesting.

Maybe that was it. The end was in sight for Wald. That’s why his dad hugged him. He wanted a clean conscience before the shit hit the local fan. *Don’t do me any favors, Pop*, John thought a moment later. *Same for you, Dusty. You finally show me some courtesy, you idiot dog? Choke on it.* They were both mutts, one a two-legged version.



AS he turned left on Elm Street, John quit thinking of extraterrestrials and decided Mrs. Dumbrowski probably just talked herself out. She finally ran out of praise for Jesus, and points to prove about “today’s young people,” and complaints about politicians and actresses with go-go lifestyles. Meanwhile, the sad owners of Pizzeria-Pizzeria no doubt realized, at long last, their food was shit, and charging anything higher than nothing for it was grand larceny. So, in an ethical move, they closed their doors.

As for Harley's Grill and their attempt to venture into the world of finer dining...well, there was no sound explanation for it. Obviously, the fish was awful. He almost wanted to try it, though. See what the damn Chilean sea bass was all about. For shits and giggles. Literal shits, he figured. Guaranteed stomachache, plus regurgitation.

By now, John had wandered back to the block Harley's was on. *I'll get my ass in gear*, he thought, *and head into Harley's for the fanciest dish they've ever served up. It'll be hilarious. This is going to be...this will...wait. Wait. It can't be.... What?*

The façade sign read "Charlie's Grill." John stood there staring at it. Logic told him it had also said Charlie's Grill when he passed by 20 minutes earlier. He'd probably been so focused on the sidewalk board, he hadn't noticed. And that's why they were selling Chilean sea bass—the place was under new ownership. Another thing his dad failed to mention.

No, John thought a split second later. *I'm positive. Harley's Grill. It said Harley's. That's what was so funny about today's special. There's no way I missed the name change. Not a chance.*

Just as he concluded this, he noticed the words on the sandwich board were written in neon yellow. And there was a drawing—a decent one—of a fisherman pulling his catch out of the sea.

Feeling a bit dizzy, John glanced toward the intersection. The sign read "Poplar St." That was impossible. There was no Poplar Street in Wald. His entire life, the Harley's cross street was called Spruce Avenue. Why would they trade one tree's name for—*Stop it*, he told himself. *Stop right now. It was time to be empirical. It was time to fucking chill.*

So what, his dad hugged him. So a stupid dog didn't bark. So an annoying old windbag had enough consideration not to waste his time, and a stinking pizza shop closed.

These were hardly examples of the universe being turned on its ear. They weren't even marginally cosmic occurrences. But he'd let them spin his head so fast he started thinking a goddamn street had changed. And a restaurant magically morphed.

Moronic. Everything was exactly as it was when he arrived in this godforsaken place two hours earlier. Nothing had changed. Nothing ever did around here.

Maybe that was it. Wald was so painfully self-centered, so empty of identity, its inhabitants could suddenly act in ways inconsistent with their past selves. And the lousy details of the town itself could shift when he wasn't looking.

Such craziness could occur in a place like Wald. A place so up its own ass it eventually disappeared into it. Wald. The name alone killed him. It should have been spelled "Walled." It amazed him that nobody who lived here realized how fitting the name was.

You'd think if a resident spent two damn seconds thinking about the name, they'd realize it was a clear warning to get the fuck out. *Escape From Walled.*

That went double for anyone, like him, who knew it was capable of cosmetic tweaks. Hell of a trick, Wald. A burg so bent on keeping its citizens trapped it made minor visual adjustments to give the illusion of progress. And these dolts were so dim that something like a color change in the marker on a dry-erase board would be enough to distract them from their hellish surroundings—and might even be enough to keep them from leaving.

Not that anyone ever left Wald, aside from him. His dying mom

couldn't keep him here. Or his dad's breakdown. He played the game the way *he* wanted to play it. So maybe the town was finally doing the same to him. Wald was saying, "To hell with you, John," the same way he'd said to hell with his dad when he could have used some help.

Oddly enough, the one person he suddenly wanted to talk to was his old man. Maybe the guy could shed some light. John quickly mocked himself for the sentiment. *Jesus, look at you*, he thought. *Wanting Dad to be standing here right now. Get a grip.*

He'd never needed the son of a bitch much. Son of a bitch? That wasn't right. Bastard. No, bastard wasn't right either. Rube. That's what his dad was. A rube. Rube was fair. He'd always been one. He'd let that woman he married swallow him up. Thirty-six years living with John's mom—Jesus, only a guy with the word "sucker" stamped across his forehead could get roped into something like that.

John had been surprised when his dad cried at her funeral. Because in his opinion, she'd been dead inside since day one. Not an original thought, idea, or dream in her corn-fed head—just a bunch of bad recipes and clichéd expressions that belonged cross-stitched on pillows. What little fire his dad possessed got smothered fast by his wife's wet blanket of a personality. She took him down with her. That's what boring types do. They take you apart, piece by piece, with their blandness.

People say it's hard to keep up with a mover and a shaker. Try keeping up with a dullard. They'll suck the spirit clean from your

soul and leave you standing there, an exhausted husk, unable to move. Spun, spent, done. If his dad's breakdown hadn't come a full three years after his wife died, John would have pointed to her insipidness as the cause.

There never was a clear explanation for why his dad went off the rails the way he did. Maybe it was the town's tricks that did it. Maybe one day he

bought one of those "homemade pies" they sell at the roadside produce stand. The pie was peach when he paid for it, but it was apple when he got home. Discovering this, his dad would have thought, *They must've made a mistake. They put an apple one with the peach. Honest mistake.*

Five minutes later the pie changed to blueberry. Minutes after that, cherry. Then it changed from pumpkin to rhubarb to pecan. And maybe that's when he snapped.

John had never really thought much about what happened to his dad. But he was thinking about it now. Was it because he was snapping himself? Again, he wanted to confer with his old man. *I need to talk to Dad*, he thought. *He might have an explanation.*

Unbelievably, he even wanted to see Dusty. He wanted to hear the damn dog bark. *I gotta get to Dad*, a voice in his head was saying now. *Dad and the dog. Dad and Dusty.*



DUSTY didn't make a peep when John reached the bungalow on Maple Street. The front door was locked. He rang the bell, then pounded on the door. Nothing but silence. Could a dog's whole personality change? People's personalities change. No, they don't. Not in Wald, at least. Except when they do. Like today. Today, people in his hometown were different.

"Answer the goddamn door!" John shouted. *Where the hell was his old man? Where was Dusty?* He was at the right house. He'd grown up in this house. This was the house he'd left an hour earlier. His stuff was in the room at the top of the stairs.

**HELL, HE'D BET MONEY AN
INTERGALACTIC ARMY WOULD INSTANTLY
MOVE ON IF THEY EVER LANDED IN WALD.
ANY SELF-RESPECTING, SHAPE-SHIFTING
ALIEN WOULD BE TOO EMBARRASSED TO
WEAR THE SKINS OF THESE HICKS.**



Heart starting to race, John glanced up and down the street. It looked like the street he'd just come from. The houses looked like the fucking houses on the neighboring street. He stopped pounding on the door. *What the shit was happening?*

Sweating in the August heat, John headed back toward Wald's business district. As he retraced his steps, he suddenly felt certain that Harley's Grill wasn't even called Charlie's anymore. The words on the sandwich board weren't neon yellow. Or putrid teal. They were some other color.

I'm the one who left! he thought, his eyes scanning the houses.

I'm the one who got out of Wald. I left!

The look of this block had changed, too. The colors of the houses. John felt lost in his old hometown. Which direction was Harley's? Or Charlie's? Whatever it was called. *Wait. Stop and think about this. Sit down and think. Wait. Stop. Think.* 🔑

Joe DeRosa is an L.A.-based comedian, writer, director, and actor ("Better Call Saul" and "Louie"), as well as a lifelong fan of dark fiction, weird tales, and anthology horror. This story comes from his book project, "Some Severe Situations."



MARCH PET OF THE MONTH

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MOONLIGHT MINX

PHOTOGRAPHY
BAARIKS GALLERY

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One crucial thing we forgot to do before planning this shoot was ask our March Pet of the Month, Jay Marie, if she could roller skate. Her answer was a hard "Hell, no!" Despite her Bambi legs and nervous jitters, Jay Marie managed to look effortlessly beautiful on the rink. Next time, we'll ask for permission and not forgiveness.

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TEAR HERE

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JAY MARIE  MARCH 2019 PET OF THE MONTH



TEAR HERE



JAY MARIE

Vital Stats:

32C-28-37

5'6"

20 years old

Hometown: San Luis Obispo, California

So, roller skating...not your thing! How was it trying to pose nude in old-school skates?

Quite honestly, it was very scary! The team would walk me around to different spots, then I would try to pose and keep it as long as I could. If I wobbled, they came running. I appreciated it a lot! They saved me multiple times.

You currently go to school. What are you studying?

I'm doing general education and trying to figure out what I'd like to do. There are so many possible careers, but I'm not sure which one I'm passionate about yet.

You were born and raised in San Luis Obispo. What do you love most about your hometown?

I love how my hometown isn't very big but still has a good amount to do. It's a beach town so it does get busy, but for the most part it's not too crowded.

What was your favorite look during the shoot?

That's tough! I loved all of them, to be honest. My favorite would have to be the one with the visor and lollipop. So fun!

What things are on your bucket list?

I want to travel! I know a lot of people say that, but there's so much I haven't seen.

Secret obsessions?

I love cats. My kitty is so spoiled.

How did you get into modeling?

I had a photographer ask me in September to be a part of his project, so I figured I'd try it. That shoot was pretty much nude, so since the beginning I've been shooting that way.

What do you love about posing naked?

What I love most is that I feel free. I didn't feel weird about being naked in front of the team. I've gotten very comfortable with it. It's helped me become more secure with my body.

What was it like working with *Penthouse*?

It was such a great experience! Everyone was super sweet and made me feel very comfortable. Once we wrapped it up, I was sad it was over. 

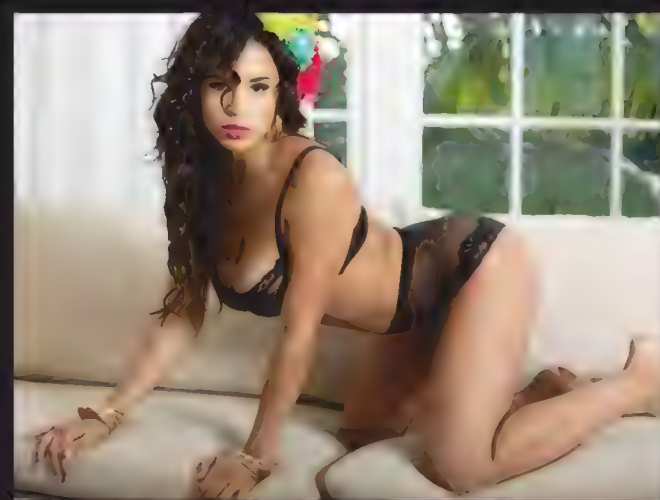
SEE MORE OF JAY MARIE AT PENTHOUSE.COM



PENT
AUTUMN FALLS OF



PENTHOUSE
APRIL 2019 PET OF THE MONTH



AUTUMN FALLS

Vital Stats:

32D-26-34

5'3"

20 years old

Hometown: New York, New York

Why did you pick the name Autumn Falls?

It was given to me by a friend. Autumn is my birth name, but Falls is a stage name. I just went with it.

Did you like the Cuban 1940s throwback theme?

It was interesting and fun! I've never done anything like that and I loved the big flowers in my hair. It was cold outside, but I managed to make it through the pool scenes. I loved the outside shots. I loved the fruits. It brought out the best in me.

How did you get into the adult industry?

After I turned 18, I started webcamming right away. I always knew I wanted to be in the adult entertainment industry. One of my friends helped me find an agent, and after I signed, I was ready to go. It's only been four months, but I didn't hesitate.

Any shocking surprises along the way?

Not yet!

What attracted you to the adult world?

I have always had an affinity for adult magazines and been curious about them. I remember checking them out when I was younger and knowing that I wanted to model in those pages. One of the first times I ever watched porn was during a big blackout storm in New York. I went online and was hooked.

You grew up in New York City. How was that?

Manhattan makes you grow up really fast. I matured quickly and I have been doing things on my own since I was super young.

Did you get into trouble?

No way. I was a good girl. I just wanted to be a good student, a good kid. I've always been like that.

Do you miss New York?

It's bittersweet. I'm happy here in Los Angeles.

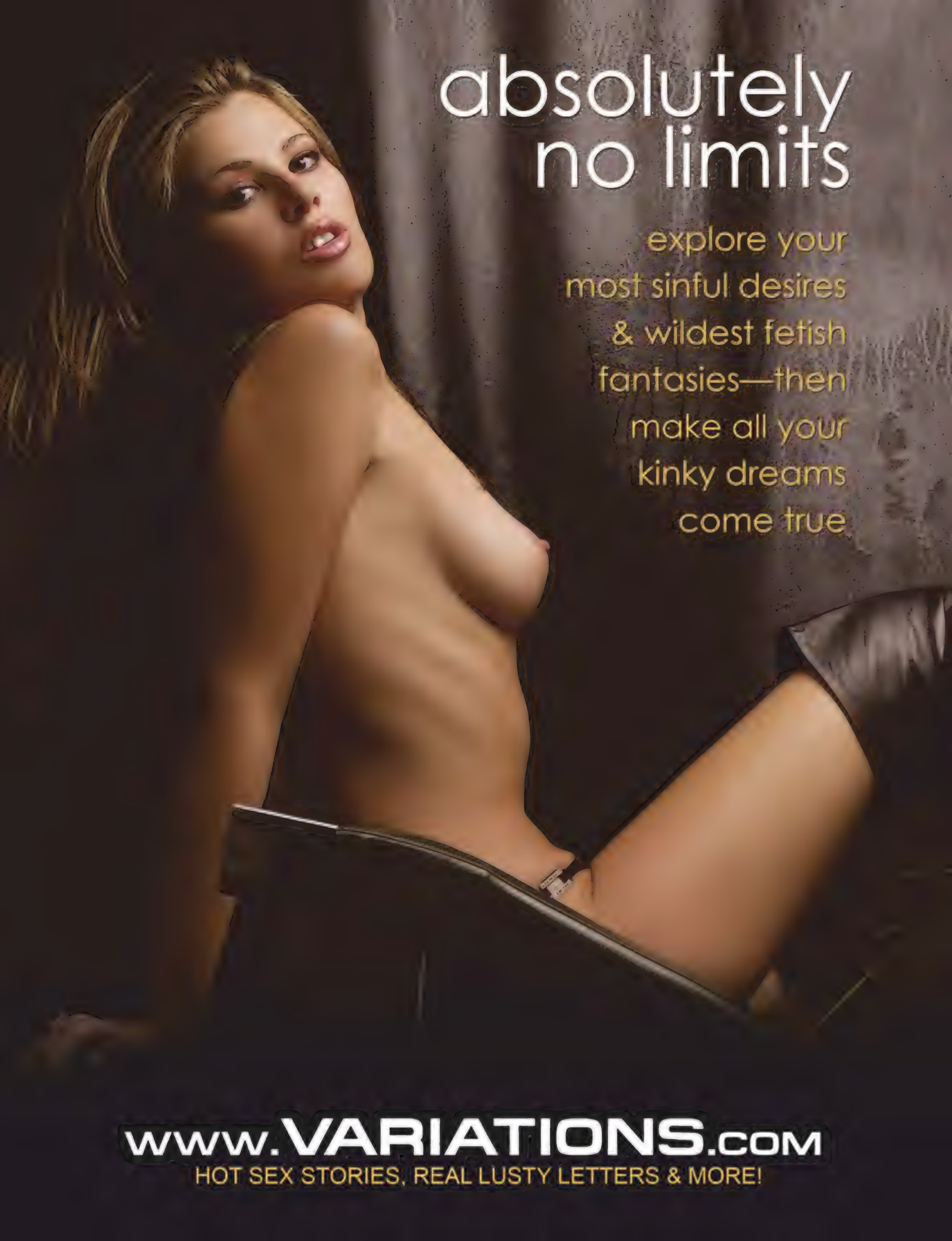
There's that perpetual war between the East and West coasts. Use one word to describe L.A. vs. NYC.

Los Angeles is so laid back. New York? Busy as hell!

What are your plans for the future?

I want to grow my name, my brand, and keep working hard. The bigger, the better! 🙌

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APRIL PET OF THE MONTH

CUBAN MISSILE

PHOTOGRAPHY
GERALD DE BEHR

April Pet of the Month Autumn Falls may be an adult entertainment newbie, but behind the camera she's an old pro. We're not sure if she's Cuban, but she had that flare so we went with it. Needless to say, she fully embraced the role.































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DARK GIG

Inside the Business of Murderabilia

BY SETH FERRANTI • ILLUSTRATIONS BY ALEXANDER HEIR

I CONSIDER myself a normal person," says Andrew Dodge, 28, whose line of work involves visiting convicted murderers, writing to serial killers, and selling artifacts in some way associated with the world's most twisted souls. "I'm a small-town guy," the Washington State native continues, "who just happens to befriend infamous criminals."

One of America's leading "murderabilia" dealers, selling homicide-linked collectibles from his online store, TrueCrimeAuctionHouse.com, Dodge does cop to a fascination with sociopathic minds—especially the minds of killers who acquire a macabre celebrity for their shocking acts. And he adds, "Anyone who knows me knows I have a very dark sense of humor. Every day is like Halloween for me."

A level of comfort with darkness is not only an asset, given his business, but a necessity. Dodge travels to meet with prisoners on death row. He speaks by phone to multiple murderers weekly. Then there's his website, where you can purchase Charles Manson's clipped hair in a glassine bag, a hand tracing from Richard "The Night Stalker" Ramirez, and an autographed work of art by Dennis Rader, aka the BTK Strangler.

Those looking for an item connected to serial killer Ted Bundy will find a scrap of plastic from one of the green trash bags Utah police recovered from Bundy's tan VW Bug in 1975—part of Bundy's "murder kit," which included handcuffs, an ice pick, a crowbar, gloves, a ski mask, and a mask made from pantyhose.

Some of the goods have an eerie normalcy, like a handwritten recipe for chili con carne from Arthur Shawcross, who killed at least 13 people in upstate New York.

Other tokens include prison letters, autographs, postcards, jail-cell books, goatee and pubic hair clippings, bloody handprints, a playing card signed by Henry Hill (the mobster turned informant played by Ray Liotta in *Goodfellas*), a San Quentin death-row hot pot signed by Richard Allen Davis, who kidnapped and killed 12-year-old Polly Klaas, and an anthology of haiku poetry that Rader once had inside his Kansas prison cell.

Remember the 2003 Macaulay Culkin movie, *Party Monster*? It tells the story of Michael Alig, a flamboyant Manhattan party promoter who murdered and dismembered a friend and fellow drug addict in 1996, before dumping body parts in the Hudson River. Dodge's site offers an Alig foot tracing and a signed copy of the killer's Wikipedia page.

Each item listed on the site features an enlargeable photograph, additional images, and an information-packed

column summarizing the relevant criminal's life and dark deeds, along with a description of the item's origin.

In the "Books" category, there's a 1971 paperback called *None Dare Call It A Conspiracy*, a best seller pushing the idea of a "New World Order"—a secret society of wealthy elites trying to spread a global socialist government—that once belonged to David "Son of Sam" Berkowitz, who killed six New Yorkers by handgun between the summers of 1976 and 1977.

While Shawcross's recipe costs just \$50, the Berkowitz book, which contains his handwritten marginal notes, goes for \$1,666, making it one of the site's pricier items.

The book's webpage notes that Berkowitz's notoriety led to New York State enacting so-called "Son of Sam" laws, which bar criminals from monetizing their fame. It adds:

"The book was owned by Berkowitz in prison. Accompanied is a handwritten letter signed by Dee Channel, Berkowitz's infamous pen pal. Included is the original envelope the book was sent to Dee in. The envelope return address is signed, Berkowitz."

Visiting Dodge's store is like taking a comprehensive, intimate tour of America's top homicides in the past 40-plus years. All the big-name killers are here, represented by at least one item, from John Wayne Gacy to O. J. Simpson (okay, accused killer), and from Aileen Wuornos (played by Charlize Theron in 2003's *Monster*) to Scott Peterson, convicted of killing his pregnant wife, Laci, in Modesto, California, in 2002.

Items linked to murderous terrorists, such as those involved in the Boston Marathon and Oklahoma City bombings, appear, too.

Terry Nichols, who conspired with Timothy McVeigh in the 1995 Oklahoma massacre, mailed a religious book, *Things That Differ*, last July, and now it can be yours for \$185. It was sent from the Florence, Colorado, supermax prison where Nichols occupies "Bombers Row" alongside Olympic Park terrorist Eric Rudolph and Ted "The Unabomber" Kaczynski. Opposite the title page, Nichols neatly wrote, "I hope you find this enjoyable, informative, and enlightening. Blessings, Terry."

Taking in the letters and books, the cookware and music CDs, we're reminded that these killers, their crimes ghastly, their sociopathy extreme, are, or were, members of our species, no matter how much we wish they weren't. We call them "monsters," understandably—see the aforementioned movie titles—but Dodge's shop, crowded with humdrum human objects, makes it harder to view these individuals as unrecognizably alien.



Heir

It's an awareness most sharply present when looking at the photos and letters. We encounter future killers in snapshots taken by friends or family. Sarah Kolb, who strangled and dismembered a high-school classmate in 2005, is shown posing with two golden retrievers. On the photo's flip side, Kolb wrote the dogs' names: Kye and Abby.

John Robinson, sometimes called the "internet's first serial killer" for making online contact with victims beginning in 1993, was convicted of three murders, admitted to five more, and might have killed others. In the "Photographs" section, we see a grinning, grade-school Boy Scout shaking hands with a fellow Scout.

Enlarge the letters and you can read them. Again, many are striking in their normalcy. If the info page didn't detail the horrific murders, you wouldn't guess the words were penned by a homicidal sadist. Some of the killers write clearly, even elegantly, and express normal human emotions (whether genuine or feigned).

"The holiday card you sent was cool," writes Richard Ramirez. "How's the new neighborhood? Made any new friends? I hope you're feeling better."

A typed, six-page letter from John Wayne Gacy quickly gets less "normal," though, as he starts manipulating, lying, simmering with controlled rage, and graphically discussing sex.

A handwritten Manson letter, priced at \$350, is jagged of style and thought, has a few cross-outs, and includes a swastika. But, on balance, the letters were not written in the extreme state of mind these killers presumably entered when committing their crimes.

In the "Female Killers" section, some of the convicts write bubbly, unguarded missives, using exclamation points, all caps, and even heart-dotted i's.



BUT what about those face-to-face interactions Dodge has with killers, separated by safety-glass partitions? Dodge says one murderer he's met stands out from the others.

"I've only been truly scared twice while visiting an inmate," the true-crime collector reveals, "and both times it was with the same individual."

The first encounter was in November 2017, and the setting was one of the death-row buildings at the Allan B. Polunsky Unit in the boondocks of southeast Texas. Polunsky is a grim, sprawling complex of gray concrete buildings on 470 acres of unincorporated land. It's surrounded by high-security fencing topped with razor wire, and guards surveil the 23-structure complex from a quartet of watchtowers 24-7. Dodge won't name the inmate, one of roughly 300 at any given time in this wing of Polunsky, where the prisoners wear white jumpsuits with "DR" on the back, and live in slit-windowed cells of 60 square feet.

The eight-year veteran of the murderabilia circuit has a rule concerning discussion of killers: He'll only go into detail about those who have died, or those he no longer communicates with. Depending on the convict, he may not even identify them by name. But he will say this about the Polunsky inmate:

"His crimes were shocking, grotesque, stomach-wrenching."

In the movies, the most famous visit to a serial killer is when FBI Academy trainee Clarice Starling, played by Jodie Foster, visits Hannibal Lecter, played by Anthony Hopkins, in *The Silence*

of the Lambs. Lecter utters his celebrated line at the end of the unnerving encounter: "A census taker once tried to test me. I ate his liver with fava beans and a nice Chianti."

In that scene, Starling walks down a dim corridor between barred cells. One inmate creepily stares. Another says something crude. Even before she reaches Lecter, it's scary.

During Dodge's Polunsky visit, he removed his shoes, went through a metal detector, and got patted down by a correctional officer, who looked at him sideways for wanting to visit this death-row inmate. He was then escorted into a visitors' room, where he watched the clock, waiting. He had no idea what to expect from the guy. Dodge says the fear wasn't there right away. But he felt a heaviness in his soul from the place's grimness.

Finally, the jumpsuited inmate arrived. He began talking about his murders. Dodge had listened to killers discuss their acts before. And he'd been reading about murders for years. But this experience was different, he says. This guy got granular, and his crimes were horrific. "What made matters worse," Dodge says, "was that the individual was not only bragging, but *smiling* the entire time as he relived his crimes, discussing everything in detail.

I didn't feel physically scared. The conditions in the room were safe. But I felt emotional and mental fear, listening to him. I was almost in a state of paralysis."

This didn't stop Dodge from visiting the inmate a second time. And once again, the man began to brag and smile as he went back over the details of his gruesome murders.



AS Dodge points out, there are two questions people tend to ask when they learn what he does for a living. *How'd you get into this?* is one.

The other question raises the issue of "blood money"—the ethics of making money selling items connected to these brutal crimes. Sometimes, Dodge says, people suggest what he does isn't right.

In response, the collector counters, "I'm not hurting anybody with what I do. I don't find it any different than what the media and Hollywood does with true-crime content, and always has. And I'm on a tiny molecule scale compared to what they do."

It's hard to argue Dodge's point about the monetizing of murder. True-crime material is everywhere you look, whether on television (*Dateline NBC*, *48 Hours*, *Making A Murderer*), in movies (*Zodiac*, *My Friend Dahmer*, *Monster*), or in books.

Consider *In Cold Blood*, Truman Capote's 1966 literary masterpiece about the murder of a Kansas family in 1959, and Vincent Bugliosi's book *Helter Skelter*, about the Manson murders, published in 1974. These are the world's top-selling true-crime narratives, with millions of copies printed. Both came out shortly after the crimes, with relatives of the victims still grieving. And they made a lot of money for two New York publishers, and two authors.

Tabloid newspapers like the *New York Post* run wild with murder stories—especially the marquee ones, such as the JonBenét Ramsey case, or that of O. J. Simpson. (Side note: Dodge's site does have Simpson items for sale, including his Citgo Plus credit card.)

True crime has been a hot genre for a while, of course. Ann Rule's best-selling 1980 book about Ted Bundy, *The Stranger Beside Me*, sold millions, and Rule followed it up with a number of other best sellers, while spawning dozens of imitators. These days, however,

story-delivery venues have multiplied, from Netflix to podcasts, and they're monetizing more true-crime material than ever. *Serial*, *S-Town*, and *My Favorite Murder* are three of the top podcasts in the last few years, and all three work the true-crime genre.

Murdersells. Serial killers can acquire a name-recognition factor rivaling celebrities in sports and movies. In terms of monetizing homicides, where do you draw the line? Does Dodge cross it?

His website's tone is sober. It's a well-designed site, but it's not slick, or sensationalistic. It doesn't come off as romanticizing or elevating these sociopaths. And it's not like Dodge is getting rich off his enterprise. He says his platform receives up to 150,000 unique views weekly, but the attention doesn't convert to huge sales, with most of the visitors just browsing.

"I'm not one who glamorizes what they do," Dodge says simply. "These killers are grotesque, they are unforgivable. I find comfort in knowing they are locked up. But I am also aware there are others like them on the loose, which is terrifying. Law enforcement believes at any given time there are 25 to 50 active American serial killers."

Dodge uses terms like "artifacts," "preservation," and "dark history" when discussing his site. While other people might get nerdy about vinyl records, Civil War battles, wine vintages, or the etymology of words, Dodge is driven to collect and catalog material shadowed by homicide, soaked with blood. He wants to get close to these objects—close enough to touch.

"I enjoy the dark history part of it," he says. "Murder will always happen, violent death will always be around us, and I choose to embrace and understand death, rather than fear every single thing around the corner. I believe in preserving this dark material, for historical purposes, and for the fascination, the curiosity, we have about these crimes."



ANDREW Dodge was 11 when his own fascination began. That was when he learned about the Milwaukee chocolate-factory worker turned cannibal, Jeffrey Dahmer.

People have asked Dodge if there was some horror in his own childhood that might account for the way he gravitates toward darkness, but he says his childhood was normal, though he did, like a lot of kids, weather a parental divorce. And like a lot of teenagers, he acted out in high school, and eventually dropped out. He ended up getting his GED, and later received a two-year degree in Human Services.

Jeffrey Dahmer's story kindled an early interest in murderers, but it wasn't until 2010, at age 19, that Dodge first wrote a letter to a jailed serial killer, Phillip Jablonski, with whom he still corresponds.

Between 1978 and 1991, Jablonski killed five women, with four of the murders coming after he was paroled following 12 years in prison for the 1978 murder of his girlfriend. During his first incarceration, a woman responded to Jablonski's newspaper ad and they ended up getting married. This woman was one of those he killed in 1991 during a five-day murder spree. His actions included stabbing, strangling, raping, mutilating, and shooting. Behind bars at San Quentin, Jablonski is currently one of 2,600-plus prisoners on death row nationwide.

During the period when Dodge first contacted Jablonski (a

convict known, in fact, for his prison letter-writing), he had been watching a lot of movies, documentaries, and TV shows about serial murderers, and decided to reach out to one. The impetus, he explains, was to gain a little understanding, if possible, into what makes these killers tick.

This quest to illuminate, in any way, behavior unfathomable to most of us continues to fuel Dodge's collecting and outreach efforts. He is especially struck by the way psychopaths can commit the most obscene homicides and then, in some cases, come home to a wife and kids and eat a sandwich. He says holding a letter written by Ted Bundy or Aileen Wuornos gives a chilly thrill. But to him, it also feels like this spooky intimacy delivers a small insight into the killers. Most important of all, Dodge says, possessing these objects—taking murder tokens in hand—gives him an experience of getting close to evil, without risk to his safety. Nobody wants a serial killer at their front door. His business brings him close to his enduring fascination, without the dangerous consequences.



SO how does he go about contacting killers?

"I usually do a little bit of research first," Dodge says. That includes going into Department of Corrections databases and digging up basic inmate information. Sometimes he'll call a prison to track down a detail. Then he writes a letter of introduction. He asks how the inmate is doing, and says a few things about his hobbies and "real-life stuff like food, politics, news, TV." Sometimes an inmate contacts him first, rather than the other way around.

"A lot of them just want somebody who isn't on the inside to talk to," he says.

Dodge has now corresponded with more than 250 inmates. He's traveled to multiple penitentiaries for visits, and has sat down with four death-row prisoners and counting. Among the killers he has visited is David Conley, who massacred eight people in August, 2015, in Houston, six of them children, one of the kids his own 13-year-old son.

Serial killers David Berkowitz, Wayne Williams, and Derrick Todd Lee; Mikhail Markhasev (killer of Bill Cosby's only son, Ennis); Manson family member Bruce Davis; and Boston mob boss and FBI informant Whitey Bulger, murdered after a prison transfer this past October—Dodge has corresponded with them all. He and Bulger were in contact for some time, and Dodge even has a museum-type display in his home exhibiting Bulger documents and a portrait painting by Tennessee artist Adam Crutchfield. Dodge prizes a Bulger letter complaining about how Johnny Depp made \$20 million playing him in *Black Mass*. The document also reveals that Depp repeatedly asked to visit Bulger, but the mobster said no.

Charles Manson, who died in 2017, only wrote Dodge once, sending a postcard covered in incoherent rambling. Dodge says Richard Ramirez, who died in 2013, had a colorless communication style—somewhat surprising considering this was a guy who, during his first court appearance in 1988, held up a pentagram-inscribed hand and yelled, "Hail, Satan!"

"In our exchanges, he was a very boring man," Dodge says, adding, "Most of his letters, he would be like, 'What is your



Dodge with a painting by John Wayne Gacy

favorite color?' Or band. Or food. A lot of normalized questions and bland statements."

Ramirez did get weirder in letters to women, however. "I've seen some of this correspondence," Dodge continues. "Ramirez would ask women for foot photos. If they had children, he would ask about their cup size or what their vagina was shaped like."

Then, there was the time Ramirez called Dodge and they had their only conversation. "On the phone," the true-crime collector says, "he sounded robotic."



WHEN Dodge first began acquiring these relics, he coveted a painting by John Wayne Gacy, who was executed by lethal injection in 1994. Now, Dodge owns two Gacys, one of them depicting "Pogo the Clown." Pogo—as any true-crime fan knows—was the name of the clown character Gacy played while performing at children's birthday parties in seventies-era Chicago. Sometimes Gacy did his killing while dressed in this costume.

Dodge also owns art created by Cary Stayner, who murdered four women near Yosemite Park during a few months in 1999. "The Yosemite Killer," as he was known, remains on death row at San Quentin. Dodge purchased the art from one of Stayner's former pen pals. He bought the Gacy works from the killer's former art dealer. Dodge hangs the art of both men on his walls—favorite items in his personal collection.

Not every killer responds to his overtures. The six-foot-nine serial murderer and necrophile Edmund Kemper, who killed ten people between 1964 and 1973, including hitchhiking college women, has ignored Dodge's letters. Dodge knows of only two people who have received responses from Kemper, a man who once scored a 145 on an IQ test given at an asylum for the criminally insane. Similarly, Anthony Sowell, aka the Cleveland Strangler, won't correspond, though he did send Dodge two pieces of his art, which got this killer of 11 women in trouble at the Ohio prison where he sits on death row.

Other convicts won't stop asking for stuff.

"Some prisoners can be divas and have ridiculous demands," Dodge says. "Dennis Rader is very manipulative. He wants you to number the pages of your letters, format everything correctly, and he'll correct your paragraph structure, your spelling, etc." Speaking of Rader, who once served as a compliance officer in his Wichita, Kansas, suburb, fining people for minor infractions like overgrown lawns, Dodge adds, "He's been by far the biggest pest and annoyance of anyone."

Dylann Roof, the white supremacist who gunned down nine African-Americans worshipping at a Charleston, South Carolina, church in 2015, did respond to Dodge, who wrote him a letter on the day Roof got arrested. But when Dodge posted Roof's letter, priced at \$1,000, multiple media sources ran with the story, and the killer went silent.

"Roof was the first inmate to blow up on my website," Dodge says.

The *New York Daily News* contacted Dodge for a comment. "It's just an extreme hobby, more than anything," he told the paper. "Everybody's fascinated with true crime to an extent, but I take it a step further. Some people get it, some people don't."

The Roof letter, bought by a foreign collector, is written in a calm, polite style, and seems normal, except for a moment halfway through when the racist killer expresses a concern: "I also want to ask you the origin of your last name. Is Dodge an English surname? Or is it anglicized (?) name of a different origin?"



DODGE'S true-crime operation began as a hobby: He bought a murder-linked item, and then bought another. Before long, he realized he could parlay his passion into a business, as there seemed to be enough of a subculture to justify an online store, and plenty of murders to keep fueling his enterprise.

These days, Dodge says a pretty diverse crowd visits his site, from strange fans obsessed with certain serial killers to academics, retired cops, and museum curators. He says law enforcement surveils his site periodically, perhaps working on cold cases, studying killers, or looking to see if any "Son of Sam" laws are being broken.

Though convicts themselves can't profit by monetizing their notoriety, it's not illegal for friends or relatives of a killer to sell an item. Nor is it illegal for Dodge to receive a letter written by an A-list killer and hawk it for a large sum. Over the years, legislators have proposed shutting down the murderabilia trade altogether, but that hasn't happened yet.

The value of a true-crime collectible depends on the killer's profile, high or low, as well as rarity. And when it comes to letters, handwritten documents are worth more than typed ones, naturally, and signatures, as opposed to initials, bump up the price.

"The most expensive murderabilia item to date that I can think of was Bonnie Parker's personal Colt .38 snub-nosed revolver," Dodge says. "That sold for \$264,000. My most valuable item is Aileen Wuornos's robe, which I have priced at \$8,500."

Dodge bought the robe from Dawn Botkins, Wuornos's childhood best friend, and a woman Wuornos wrote to for ten years while on death row—correspondence later compiled into a kind of Wuornos autobiography called *Dear Dawn*, published in 2012.

"Botkins received all of Wuornos's property and even her ashes after she was executed in Florida in 2002," Dodge explains. "The robe came with two certificates of authenticity. Wuornos wore it every day until her execution."

During Dodge's years of corresponding with convicts, and running his shop, he has learned to obey some basic safety protocols. He uses a PO box, for example, and advises anyone writing inmates to do so. He puts the matter directly: "You are always at risk of an inmate knowing someone on the outside and finding you, worst-case scenario."

He says he's been harassed online—by a killer's girlfriend, or by supporters of a killer—for selling an item connected to an inmate he no longer communicates with.

"It's crazy," Dodge says. "Especially when the killer is just manipulating the girl. I've had problems with groupies for Dylann Roof, Erik and Lyle Menendez, and Sarah Jo Pender."

The Menendez brothers killed their parents in Beverly Hills in 1989. Pender was convicted, along with her boyfriend, of murdering two roommates in Indiana in 2000.

Despite so much contact with psychopaths, Dodge says he's only had a few uncomfortable experiences. In 2013, a Mexican cartel hitman, José Martínez, sent Dodge a stick-figure drawing meant to represent the collector in a noose. Along with the image, the assassin wrote, "This is one of the ways I killed people."

The threat stemmed from Martínez suspecting Dodge of being a cop after he asked questions related to Martínez's former and current trials. Dodge says he was just interested in how the mind of a cold-blooded hitman worked. He was also threatened by Jeremy Jones, aka the Crystal Meth Killer, a man investigators described as a "redneck Ted Bundy" for his Alabama charm and



good looks. There was a miscommunication between Jones and Dodge concerning a Bible the serial killer had sent him.

Dodge's journey into this netherworld of people locked up for acting on homicidal urges has resulted in a change of viewpoint on the death penalty.

"Before stepping into a death-row visiting room, I was pro-death penalty," he says. "Now I am against it 100 percent. What these killers have done is horrible and they must pay for their actions, but I don't view these people as monsters. They are just very disturbed individuals, with different underlying factors, issues, and their own demons, which got them into their predicament in the first place."

Dodge refers to the killers he gets to know as "walking, talking dark history books." However, his relationship with Dustin Lynch, who at age 15, in 2002, murdered a 17-year-old Ohio girl, might stand apart from the rest. Dodge calls it a kind of friendship.

Lynch—serving 20 years to life—was back in the news in 2013 when he strangled his cellmate, a convicted pedophile. Lynch carved "CHOMO" into the man's back with a razor, which prison officials believe stood for "child molester."

To say, then, that Dodge has a tolerance for darkness is putting it mildly.

Consider, also, the fact that his art collection contains works by a Washington State killer nicknamed "The Werewolf Butcher" for his horrific murders in the mid-nineties involving a mother and two children, sexual mutilation, and the displaying of bodies. The man's name is Jack Spillman, and he's serving a life sentence in Dodge's home state.

"The few pieces of Spillman art I have are some of my favorites," Dodge says in a conversational tone. "It's very meticulous work. Spillman spends months on just one piece of art at a time, perfecting it until the piece is complete."



FOR visitors to Dodge's website, the exposure to so much darkness can be deeply unsettling. At the same time, it shines light on an issue that has always confronted human beings: What do we do with society's most deviant, violent, destructive individuals? People with psyches so warped they can kill and then go eat a meal. We don't want to think about these individuals,

and we try our best not to. We wish they didn't exist. But they do.

Dodge's website makes this realization unignorable. Moreover, it offers a potent window on prison life—a life, a fate, for more than two million of our fellow citizens on any given day.

Some of the items in Dodge's store might not seem very exciting. A killer's prison library card. An L.A. serial killer's purchase order for a new pair of Nikes. An inmate's visitor application form. But the very banality of these items drives home the grim reality of what it's like to be on the inside, in the belly of the beast.

There's an "Inmate Appeal Form" from San Quentin, listing names of numerous death-row inmates, including Scott Peterson, requesting a television upgrade.

There's a detailed, handwritten letter from a killer describing in precise language how he crafted a "fishing line," using threads pulled from bedclothes and a flattened toothpaste tube that he then tossed outside his cell. An inmate in a nearby cell, sometimes even on a lower level, does his own "fishing." If the slender lines with their weighted ends entangle in just the right way, the connected inmates have a way to pass small items.

Stuff like this takes you inside prison life more convincingly than any TV show.



AS for Dodge, he recently launched a podcast on his website. He's already interviewed Rick Staton, a murderabilia pioneer and Gacy's former art dealer, and John Borowski, maker of documentaries on historical serial killers, including Chicago's H. H. Holmes (to be played by Leonardo DiCaprio in a forthcoming Martin Scorsese film based on the book, *The Devil in the White City*). Other episodes have featured Mafia historian and true-crime author Christian Cipollini, and former Mississippi death-row inmate Michelle Byrom, released from prison in 2016 after spending 16 years locked up.

For future podcasts, Dodge has plans to interview high-profile murderers around the country. People will listen. Our appetite for darkness is not going away any time soon. 🔑

Seth Ferranti is a former federal prisoner whose writings have been featured on VICE, Don Diva, and Gorilla Convict. He's also the author of the crime series Street Legends, and the comic series Crime Comix.

A NATION OF REBELS

BY ALAN M. DERSHOWITZ

OUR country began as a nation of rebels. We won our freedom from Great Britain by engaging in a collective act of treason against King George III.

The Declaration of Independence was the smoking-gun evidence of rebellion, punishable by execution. Had we lost the Revolutionary War, Thomas Jefferson, John Adams, and other drafters and signatories of that separatist pronouncement would likely have been hanged. As Benjamin Franklin put it to his fellow rebels: “We must, indeed, all hang together or, most assuredly, we shall all hang separately.”

The Declaration itself never cites any legal justification for separation, because there was none. Instead it invokes God, morality, and “self-evident” propositions—not all of which were so evident.

We won, and so Jefferson, Adams, and other rebels became presidents of the New Republic instead of executed martyrs. Once the rebel phase of establishing the United States was completed, the founding generation turned to the difficult task of creating a Constitution that would endure. Their first effort—the Articles of Confederacy—failed to create one united nation. The second effort—the Constitution—has now lasted for more than two and a quarter centuries, the longest enduring constitution in history.

As contrasted with the rebellious Declaration of Independence, the Constitution is a relatively conservative document. It never mentioned God. Indeed, it was criticized as the “Godless” constitution. Instead, it set out rules, structures, and laws that were difficult to amend. There is good reason for this disparity. Rebels need God on their side because they don’t have the law, whereas the framers of the Constitution feared that God could be invoked by new rebels determined to do to the United States what the Colonialists did to Great Britain—namely separate.

It is not surprising, therefore, that the next significant group of American rebels, namely the secessionist Confederates, invoked God, while Lincoln relied on the law to keep us one nation. The Revolutionary and Civil wars demonstrated that rebels and rebellion could serve both just and unjust ends.

We currently live in an age in which rebels on both sides—extremists of the right and of the left—are challenging our Constitutional system and the rule of law. Left-wing radicals view our Constitution as an imperialist, colonialist, racist, homophobic, elitist document of repression. Right-wing extremists see the government itself as repressive. They look to the Second Amendment, which they claim protects the right to bear arms

against the government, as the ultimate protection against tyranny. Neither the extreme right nor the extreme left respect the First Amendment. They both see freedom of speech and freedom of the press as weapons being used by the establishment against them. Both sides selectively cite provisions of the Constitution for “me but not for thee.”

These are dangerous times. The rule of law is being challenged. Democracy itself is being questioned. And violence is rearing its ugly head as an acceptable rebel tactic to fight against repression. Both sides invoke Thomas Jefferson’s offhanded and ill-advised remarks: “I hold it that a little rebellion now and then is a good thing, and as necessary in the political world as storms in the physical”; and “The tree of liberty must be refreshed from time to time with the blood of patriots and tyrants.”

The “little rebellion” we experienced between 1861 and 1865, aka the Civil War, was not a “good thing,” as blood rarely refreshes liberty. Indeed, the first casualty of rebellion is often liberty, as Jefferson should have known from observing the aftermath of the French Revolution, and as we have learned from the Russian, Chinese, Cuban, and other more recent revolutions.

Rebels are romantic characters, the stuff of novels and films. But in real life, one person’s rebel is another person’s terrorist or war criminal. So be careful what you wish for when you lionize violent rebels.

Most of us boast about having “rebellious streaks,” which means challenging authority nonviolently. I have a T-shirt that reads, “Challenge authority, but raise your hand first.” That sort of rebelliousness may be admirable and productive. But true rebels don’t raise their hands. They clench their fists and carry weapons.

Like everything else, rebelliousness is a matter of degree. There are rebels without causes and rebels with causes—some positive, some less so. Intellectual rebelliousness may indeed be necessary for progress, but violent rebelliousness is a double-edged sword. So let’s not make Jefferson’s mistake of admiring violent rebellion and bloodletting as “necessary” or desirable. It should be a last resort in a democracy based on the rule of law.

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THE CASE AGAINST WOKE AXL



PHOTO: SHUTTERSTOCK.COM / NIKOLA SPASENOSKI

A LIBERTARIAN CONSERVATIVE—AND GUNS N' ROSES FAN—REACTS TO THE PROGRESSIVE POLITICS OF AXL ROSE.

BY ART TAVANA

I HAVE written voluminously and freely about Guns N' Roses since I had my first column at *L.A. Weekly*. I'm now writing a book about the band. I could write a doctoral dissertation on Guns N' Roses, but alas, I'm here to let my keyboard bleed. I'm here to talk about how Axl Rose—my generation's Johnny Strabler, the bike-gang leader played by Marlon Brando in *The Wild One*—has transformed into an unintentional servant of a political agenda by becoming...“woke.”

I first submit to you a provocative, not-so-woke image—Axl Rose, 1989, as he wraps chains around the wrists of his then-girlfriend, before proceeding to gag and whip her in a bondage scene. Glimpsed in flashes, Rose's act is the template for a Guns N' Roses video promoting “It's So Easy”—a video that never aired on MTV.

The footage illustrates the moral framework from which vintage Axl Rose, once America's most unrepressed rock star, should be understood. Embodying an aesthetic creed that combined feminine ferocity with rampaging male lust, Axl Rose, as the video testifies, savagely stomps across the stage of the Cathouse club, wearing a plaid kilt and skull-print leather jacket, howling into the mic, while a swarm of groupies tear away bits of his clothing.

For America's youth, he delivered a machine-gun aria that tore through their ears, mowing down the lecturing housewives of Washington. Thirty years later, Axl Rose is a wealthy, bourgeois Democrat, lawyered-up and serving as the politically correct CEO of an American corporate rock machine.

For countless pimple-faced teenagers in an age before memes, hashtags, internet porn, and first-person shooters, it was a way to feel unrepressed and wild—catching a glimpse of Rose on MTV, imagining what it would be like to be him. Here, in videos, songs, at the concerts, was a ginger psychopath who owned an Uzi semiautomatic and once told fans at New York's Ritz that he was dedicating “Out Ta Get Me” to prudes who “tell you how to live,” who “tell you how to talk...people who tell you what you can and you can't say.”

Axl Rose is now an ally of the people he once ranted against. He wears a slick fedora, designer jeans from Barneys, reflective sunglasses, and occasionally carries a cane, like Picasso at one of his opulent art shows. He's a completely different person. *Appetite for Destruction*-era Rose had the lean, tattooed physique of a hungry featherweight boxer, the face of a teen idol, and the always-running mouth of a hillbilly Rocky Sullivan, the gangster ex-con, played by Jimmy Cagney, in the movie *Angels With Dirty Faces*. Rather than bravely riding off into the sunset with his outlaw persona pushing him further toward the grave—à la Motörhead's Lemmy Kilmister—Axl Rose now exists as a status-quo liberal.

Yes, the guy Danny Sugerman, Jim Morrison's biographer and author of a book about Guns N' Roses, once described as “symbolic of the wild and free west,” has been anointed by the media as “woke,” a characterization he doesn't deny, and probably embraces. Today's Axl Rose is a moralist, a person who wants his fans to view the Trump administration as “disgraceful” and “inappropriate.”

There's an irony here, to say the least, given that the zenith of Rose's popularity resulted from the singer being both disgraceful and inappropriate.



I STRUGGLE to reconcile the ungovernable Axl Rose I remember from my childhood (engrained in memory is a 1989 *RIP* magazine cover showing him brandishing a riot-grade shotgun between his legs, a phallic representation of his machismo) with the current, millennial-friendly version—a Twitter celebrity with a Chihuahua avatar who advocates for corporate Dems and functions, witting or not, as a liberal-media propaganda instrument.

“AXL ROSE HATES TRUMP AS MUCH AS YOU DO” crowed the online publication *The Outline* in early 2018, before enticing readers to subscribe to their newsletter with the line “Welcome to the Liberal Jungle.”



Axl Rose during GNR's show at
Gods of Metal, 2006

PHOTO: SHUTTERSTOCK.COM / BY FABIO DIENA

Axl Rose in 2019 is shiny currency for the left, given today's fashionable contempt for Trump and the amount of online attention that comes with being a celebrity member of the "resistance."

Whatever his degree of actual wokeness, it would be reductive to think tagging Rose with the "w" word sums him up in full. But, as stated, he accepts the characterization. Why? First, it strikes me as a deft career move since it gives the media a headline redirecting the gaze of anyone who might focus on Rose's past transgressions—his politically incorrect statements, the lawsuits and allegations against him from former romantic partners who say he could be both loving and brutish. As long as he continues to send out the occasional anti-Trump tweet, and stories on his wokeness drive clicks, the liberal media and progressive social media types have no interest in revisiting the Axl Rose of the eighties and nineties.

Judging from a variety of clues that appeared over the years, Rose naturally evolved into a progressive after a long period of guilt and isolation. The singer had issues—their source goes all the way back to his childhood—and psychotherapy and extended analysis essentially domesticated him. This multiyear "night of the soul" saved his life, while killing his vintage allure. Like other rock stars have had to kick a heroin habit to survive, Axl Rose had to wrestle his demons, and he's seemingly purged them from his body.



"VOTE Blue...Bitches!!" Rose tweeted last October, shortly before the midterm elections.

And yet, in 30 years of public life, Axl Rose never endorsed a political candidate, rocked the vote for MTV, contributed to a campaign, or allowed popular politics to dictate his work. Search GNR's catalog for political lyrics and you'll turn up just a generalized 1990 antiwar song "Civil War," and allusions to Communist repression in the song "Chinese Democracy." There's not a single Rose interview that clarifies his political views in any detail, except for a mention on *Jimmy Kimmel Live* in 2012 that he liked Barack Obama, but wasn't someone who voted.

Rose was 50 then, and apparently had never entered a voting booth. When George W. Bush was carpet-bombing Iraq and building the framework for a police state with the Patriot Act, Rose was silent. In 2008, the year *Chinese Democracy* was released, America was sunk in an economic recession protested by millions and fighting two elective wars overseas. The album's liner notes

thanked the Trump Hotel, but included no mention of President Bush or the body count in the Middle East.

Earlier, Rose was silent during the administrations of Ronald Reagan and Bush Sr. And during the political triangulations and Monica Lewinsky-stained Clinton years (roughly 1998 to 2000), he was, essentially, hidden from sight in his Malibu canyon mansion, struggling to free himself of the rage that had long defined his persona.

It's also worth noting that "Woke Axl," with his wealth, name recognition, and huge, international fan base, has so far restricted his progressive activities to sporadic minutes at the keyboard, tweeting, doing nothing to harness his music celebrity for activist causes in the way of someone like Bono, or Roger Waters.

But for the left in 2019, all of this is irrelevant. Rose is woke, and willing to use his platform to communicate their message. Whatever the exact definition of woke, it clearly constitutes obedience to liberal dogma and a rejection of the First Amendment.

From the outside, it's hard to calibrate how much of Woke Axl reflects a true awakening, as opposed to a winning PR strategy. But vintage Rose is gone, having vanished during his time out of the spotlight. Though he hasn't self-identified as woke, the fact that he can be used to advance retrograde elitist propaganda signals a time of mourning for the Guns N' Roses fan who remembers a different Axl.

"I think Axl's a little out of control," MTV's Kurt Loder once said, "which is the way you should be if you're going to be a big rock star.... You should be out of control."



TWO days before the November midterms, Woke Axl—the nickname thrives as a meme—tweeted that Guns N' Roses played "anti-Trump" music, a bizarre statement. I suppose an argument can be made for viewing *Appetite for Destruction* as a blowtorch cutting across the steely conservatism of the 1980s, but—and I don't know if Rose himself realizes this—Donald Trump is *not* a conservative. He's a radical.

Classic Guns N' Roses, if you ask any fan, was apolitical. The band's spirit was lubricated by cheap wine, masculinity wrestling with androgyny, and a motorcycle-gang effigy to the First and Second Amendments. Axl Rose in assless leather chaps, slithering across the stage like a lithe, Tom of Finland illustration come to life—a long-locked, Dionysian icon; an escape from the Wall Street-themed world for the hair-metal generation.



Axl Rose during GNR's show in Milan, Italy, 2010

PHOTO: SHUTTERSTOCK.COM / BY FABIO DIENA

When Axl Rose did get political, he did it with mischievous fashion choices. He strutted onto a stage in Paris in 1992 wearing a baggy leather jacket emblazoned with the Confederate flag, paired with white spandex shorts and combat boots.

This followed by four years the song “One in a Million,” where he cavalierly used the N-word, and advertised his disdain for both immigrants and “faggots,” saying they made no sense to him. Boiling with a primitive honesty, stomping around in his snakeskin boots, he kicked down the doors of political correctness.

“I don’t like boundaries of any kind,” he told *Rolling Stone* in 1988, when asked about “One in a Million.” He added, “I don’t like being told what I can and what I can’t say.” Who could have predicted that today’s Axl Rose would be thoroughly repulsed by the Axl of 1988?

Back then, Rose’s reckless inability to be his own publicist was intoxicating to so many of us, raised by the censors of cable TV and the canonized propaganda of a Christian majority. Rose was actually pushing MTV toward anarchy.

Fast-forward to 2019, and Rose is now a willing ally of a movement that aims to repress sensuality, muzzle speech on college campuses, and normalize gender-neutral expressions of humorless and grotesque “progress.”

My struggle with this led me to email a reliable voice, writer Chuck Klosterman, and he was ready with thoughts. Here’s one of his observations about Woke Axl:

“To me, the most amusing aspect of all this is imagining what would have happened if you’d have walked up to a liberal person in 1989 and said, ‘You know what? In 30 years, the man who will embody and voice the views of young progressives will be Axl Rose. But you know who all those young progressives will despise? Morrissey.’”

Rose now attacks the likes of First Lady Melania Trump, whom he described as “an alleged former hooker” in a March 2018 tweet. Here we have him virtue-signaling by referring to a conservative woman as a “hooker,” which pushes him further away from the right-wing image of Axl Rose equipped with firearms and Middle American naiveté.



IN an era where careers can be extinguished by exposure of past tweets or decades-old comments, and where even the most inconsequential act is used by liberals to smear people they disagree with, Rose has managed to duck the pitchforks and torches of the mob by, well, never disagreeing with them. While Metallica’s James Hetfield chats openly with Joe Rogan about his heretical libertarian lifestyle as a hunter and heavy-metal rebel, Rose tweets from a distance using cute emojis as punctuation for fashionable outrage.

In the fall of 2017, when actress Ashley Judd accused Harvey Weinstein of sexual harassment in a *New York Times* interview, it was a watershed moment that helped unleash #MeToo. Right around this time, the media decided that Axl Rose had not only demonstrated at least vague solidarity with #MeToo, but had in fact joined the cause, a grotesque take that was blended with his anti-Trump position to create the new-model Rose, one touted in *Vogue* this fall.

When “Woke Axl” headlines reached GNR fan sites and podcasts, some Axl Rose worshippers began pandering directly to their hero with their hashtagged Trump resistance—a phenomenon akin to the way Taylor Swift fans not only worship Swift but every Swiftian opinion.

A week after his “alleged former hooker” post, Rose tweeted, “Happy International Women’s Day!!” One would assume the left would find the singer’s feminist rebrand to be a bit hypocritical... but that’s not how the left operates. As long as Rose uses his 1.3 million Twitter followers to push his fan base further left—and

as long as he can convince his agreeable fanboys to vote, like Taylor Swift on Instagram—he remains beyond the burning glow of the torches.

This will hold, of course, only if Rose continues to comply. If he does disagree with the left by defending free speech on college campuses or tweeting about offensive or “sexist” comedians he might enjoy, he would likely ignite a campaign of self-ruination that would turn his record-breaking reunion tour into a tragic coda.

“Woke Axl” requires that Axl never detail his political beliefs. Since GNR reunited in April of 2016, Rose has refused to grant an interview to a single member of the American media. Not only that, but it seems any interview he or Slash do offer (Rose has spoken to a couple foreign reporters) is accompanied by a liability agreement or pre-interview guidelines that put the journalist and

media venue on the hook if the coverage creates a publicity storm.

Not unlike the documents handed out in Harvey Weinstein’s Hollywood, Rose’s lawyers also draft and enforce non-disclosure agreements (NDAs) to be signed by those who enter the singer’s orbit, preventing people from talking about him “in perpetuity.”

And some of those who have been in Axl’s orbit but haven’t signed an NDA tend to stay out of sight—inaccessible and untouchable—

whether out of fear of GNR and its singer or in mimicry of Rose’s own career-long war against the media.

During last year’s marketing of GNR’s *Locked N’ Loaded* box set, a celebration of the band’s *Appetite*-era work, the Guns N’ Roses equivalent of a book burning occurred.

First, the track “One in a Million” was curiously left off the collection of demos and remasters—while remaining on streaming services like Spotify. Why? Axl Rose was silent.

This silence continued as some of his fans were doxxed, bullied, and ostensibly buried on the internet by a small group of trolls, with some alleging the trolls were either hired by Rose’s management or simply driven by their own toxic fandom to coordinate an online takedown of an entire library of rare concert footage, documentaries, and GNR bootlegs—material the band couldn’t profit off or control during the *Locked* advertising blitz.

The trolls, it seems, directed the RIAA and IFPI (the Recording Industry Association of America and International Federation of the Phonographic Industry, respectively) to remove additional copyrighted GNR material from YouTube. Fans panicked on the forums, mystified by a purging whose questionable copyright violation claims were, and remain, a mystery.

For more conspiratorial fanboys, GNR had become “Big Brother.” For others, though, GNR was on the “right side of history,” and some anti-Trump Axl stooges celebrated as YouTube channels like the popular Frans N’ Roses were reported and removed.

Meanwhile, Axl Rose, apparently unconcerned or uninformed on the matter, proceeded to drag Trump on Twitter and refused to shed any light on how he became a social-media progressive, except to let us know, passive aggressively, that he’s repulsed by “One in a Million” and wants to bury his uncomfortable past (along with his demons).

Today, the left-leaning media uses Axl Rose as a recruitment tool. For the first time in his history, the singer of Guns N’ Roses has become a role model for liberal America.

Pardon me while I vomit all over my keyboard. 🔑

Art Tavana is a journalist and political pundit at Playboy and a former pop-culture columnist at L.A. Weekly.



GAME ON

BLUE BLAZERS NOT ALLOWED

The Nonconformers of Football.

BY PHIL HANRAHAN

THERE'S a case to be made that the first legit rebels in football history were seven New York University students in 1940 and 1941, four of them women.

The women's names were Evelyn Maisel, Anita Krieger, Jean Bornstein, and Naomi Bloom. Joined by three undergraduate men, Maisel and the others led campus protests against NYU's participation in so-called "gentlemen's agreements."

These agreements were a way for Southern universities to extend their segregationist athletic policies beyond the South. If they had a football game, or basketball game, or track meet involving Northern schools whose team had at least one black athlete, they would request that the school from above the Mason-Dixon line leave that student at home.

It sounds insane, but it had been happening for decades, and schools like Harvard, Boston College, Rutgers, the University of Michigan, and NYU all participated.

In 1940, University of Missouri administrators requested that NYU leave their star fullback, Leonard Bates, at home because he wasn't white. Amazingly, NYU said, "Okay."

In response, the four women and their male classmates launched the largest student action on campus that year, a politically tumultuous time, what with America fighting fascism, Communism still spreading, and Jim Crow alive and well across the South. They circulated petitions, wore "Bates Must Play" buttons, and got 2,000 students to picket the administration building. When that didn't work (Bates was kept home and NYU got their asses kicked 33-0 by Mizzou), the Bates Seven, as they were known, continued to revolt against their school's complicity with these egregiously discriminatory practices.

And they paid for their stand.

In spring 1941, NYU suspended the students for three months after they'd circulated a petition protesting a decision to keep three black athletes from competing in a track meet against Catholic University in Washington, D.C.

Two of the seven, then seniors, never graduated. Decades later, they still spoke with sadness of how their school didn't support them in their cause, and how their actions caused tensions with family members at home and peers on campus.

So if your idea of a rebel is someone who refuses to kowtow to an authority enabling oppression, then the members of the Bates Seven are fully deserving of the mantle.

But what about the other definition of rebel, the one meaning

a person who defies social convention? Football's had a few of those. In fact, I'm not sure America's other major professional team sports can compete with the NFL for players as wild at heart, as propriety-twitting, as unruly, in their own ways, as Tom Hulse's hyena-laughing, trouser-dropping Mozart in Milos Forman's *Amadeus*, a movie all about nose-thumbing.

When I was researching my Green Bay Packers book, *Life After Favre*, I had the pleasure of learning about leatherhead-era halfback Johnny Blood (born John McNally Jr. in small-town Wisconsin), arguably pro football's first world-class wild man.

You get a partial sense of Blood in the top-notch sports comedy *Leatherheads*, directed by and starring George Clooney, who loosely based his 1925 Duluth Bulldogs character Dodge Connelly on this hard-partying Hall of Famer. (Speaking of inspiration, Tom Hulse, on the *Amadeus* DVD, says he based his uproarious, manic Mozart on John McEnroe.)

Playing with fellow Hall of Famer Curly Lambeau, Blood was a force of nature on-field and off. It's hard to pick a favorite among his exuberant, *Jackass*-like antics, but here are three candidates: He escaped a towel fight with a teammate on a moving train by scrambling from the caboose's rear window to the roof, then tightroped all the way to the engine compartment up front. He once did pull-ups on a slanted flagpole jutting from the stern of an ocean liner before needing rescue by teammates. And he liked to perch on hotel window ledges and croon "Galway Bay" to female fans below.

Later, he was hired by Art Rooney to coach in Pittsburgh. In 1938, when his team was playing the Philadelphia Eagles, Blood was in Los Angeles watching a college game in the Rose Bowl. That's right—he flew to L.A. and let an assistant coach his team.

"Nobody would even believe some of the things he did," Rooney would say later, before quoting a veteran Pittsburgh player who told him, "This is the only team I've been on where the players worry about the coach instead of the other way around."

You can draw a straight line from Johnny Blood to the handsome and wild Hall of Fame Packer Paul Hornung, who was so irrepressible even sixties-era head coach Vince Lombardi, the NFL's biggest stickler, couldn't tame him. The star running back, nicknamed "The Golden Boy," repeatedly broke curfew, womanized, hung out in strip clubs, and more.

Then there was Brett Favre, the 1990s version. When I was up in Green Bay in 2008, I heard plenty of stories, most of them

involving stuff Brett said or did after midnight in this or that northeast Wisconsin bar. In sum: The Ol' Gunslinger had his fun.

If interested in the rowdy, unconventional side of football culture, you can do worse than checking out a pair of terrific books, one on the 1973 Pittsburgh Steelers, the other on the victory-notching, Dionysian Dallas Cowboys of the 1990s.

In *About Three Bricks Shy of a Load*, author Roy Blount Jr. covered the beer-loving Steelers from the Terry Bradshaw-Franco Harris era. Approaching his material with a gonzo, Hunter S. Thompson-like feel (that same year *Rolling Stone* sent Thompson himself to embed with the Oakland Raiders, but he was quickly booted), Blount lived in their training-camp dorm, guzzled Rolling Rock with players, and got to stand on the sideline during games. That's where he was when a lineman bellowed, "You picked the right team! [We're] all a bunch of crazy fuckers! [We're] all about three bricks shy of a load!"

Read it just for the portrait of running back John "Frenchy" Fuqua, he of the floor-length white cape, lavender jumpsuit, sombrero, and serape. Fuqua dreamed of wearing platform shoes with goldfish in glass heels. He claimed he was a French count turned black by nuclear fallout while vacationing in the Riviera. Supposedly he and a dapper friend showed up at a Pittsburgh nightclub once with an entourage of 20 women.

Jeff Pearlman's *Boys Will Be Boys* chronicles those winning Cowboys teams from 20-plus years ago, while also dishing on cocaine use, orgies, infidelity, and Michael Irvin stabbing a fellow Cowboy in the neck with scissors as he sat in a barber's chair.

It's the only sports book ever written with a chapter called "Anal Probe." The hijinks continue a few pages later, in a chapter called "Anarchy on (and off) the Gridiron."

So yes, football has had (and still has) its wild men, its eccentrics, its nose-thumbers. Mohawked running back John Riggins. Headband addict Jim McMahon, a 1980s Bears QB. Mullet-wearing Brian "The Boz" Bosworth, who got kicked off the Oklahoma Sooners in 1987 for strutting the sideline at the Orange Bowl in a tee-shirt reading "National Communists Against Athletes." (The NCAA had suspended the linebacker for steroid use.) "The Boz is the guy who's not afraid to be an individual in a world of automatons," he wrote in his 1988 memoir, *The Boz*.

Chad Ochocinco. Jared Allen. Clinton Portis, the costumed one, man of a dozen media personas, including Coach Janky Spanky and Angel of Southeast Jerome. And who could forget Ricky Williams posing in a wedding dress beside Mike Ditka on the cover of *ESPN: The Magazine*? Or living in a tent in Australia, smoking tons of weed?

Today, we've got Rob Gronkowski, Marshawn Lynch, and Von Miller, the off-season chicken farmer and lover of esoteric subjects. Referring to his marathon deep dives on the internet, Miller told *The Ringer*, "I spend a lot of time looking up extinct animals."

Meanwhile, down the decades, American race relations took a step forward, a step sideways, sometimes a half-step back. Twenty-nine years after the Bates Seven rebelled, the 1969 Texas Longhorns played the Arkansas Razorbacks in a clash of the nation's top two college football teams. President Nixon attended this nationally televised game. Future president George H. W. Bush was also there. Neither team had a black athlete.

And 47 years after that all-white contest, then-San Francisco quarterback Colin Kaepernick—believing his country still had some work to do when it came to racial justice, especially as regards police brutality—decided to take a knee during the national anthem.

You know what happened from there. ☹️



Rob Gronkowski at the Nickelodeon Kids' Choice Sports Awards



PHOTO: SHUTTERSTOCK.COM / BY FEATUREFLASH PHOTO AGENCY



DO YOU TRUST ME?

BY JENNY NORDBAK

THERE are many things I find sexy.

A man on his knees. The sight of my strap-on penetrating someone for the first time. A woman parting her legs wider, spreading herself open as she silently begs for more. At the top of my long list of turn-ons is something so simple and yet so fundamental to my world: trust. Witnessing trust in my partners gets me wet like nothing else can. It's communicated in subtle ways, but seeing someone let go and surrender to me is the most glorious rush.

Of all my play partners throughout the years, there was one who was submissive to her very core, and gave me a bigger trust boner than anyone else ever has. She was willing to try just about anything, but hot wax drove her wild.

The first time we tried it together, I was happy to oblige her request, but it wasn't something I had been that into before.

I took my time tying her up, savoring the sight of the bright blue rope sliding across her smooth skin, watching her become more and more helpless as I secured each piece of the bind into place. I bound her knees wide apart, opening her to me in a way that would make her conscious of her exposed pussy. I wanted her to know she was mine to do with as I pleased.

I slapped her vulva lightly with an open palm, just to reinforce the message. She squealed and thrust her hips against the rope, but could barely move. *Perfect.*

I picked up the lit candle carefully and held it over her, moving it close to her skin to let her feel the warmth of the tiny flame. She watched my every move, tense with anticipation.

Wax play without a blindfold is different from the blindfolded version. With a blindfold, you can't see when the wax is coming, which can be deliciously disarming. Without a blindfold, as here, she could watch me tip the candle ever so slowly, knowing the hot wax was arriving and there was nothing she could do to stop it.

I dripped first across her marvelously plump thigh, allowing the wax to trail down to her sensitive inner thigh before it hardened and stuck to her flesh. She panted and moaned. Now that the ritual had begun, I moved on instinct, pouring and rubbing, slapping the skin in some places to make it sting before the wax hit the already tingling spot. I changed candles, crisscrossing her body with a lovely pattern of colors as the wax dried in place.

I pinched each of her nipples hard, but she only opened her mouth and moaned deeply. She liked the pain so I did it harder, alternating between grazing her with my teeth and pinching with my fingers. Her moans turned frantic, and I could tell we were entering the territory of pain where she wanted more but also wanted to flee from it. Against the ropes, she had nowhere to go. And still, she arched up to me, trusting that I would give her what she needed in the end.

I slid one hand down her body, careful not to knock any of the wax off as I worked my way to her clit. Her pussy was so wet that my

fingertips were coated in her slick arousal just from brushing over her pussy. I rubbed my middle finger in quick circles against her clit as I bit down on her nipple again.

She begged, "Yes, yes, more, more, *more!* Please, Mistress!"

I laughed and thrust my fingers into her pussy, pumping in and out in long, slow strokes as I grabbed a candle with my other hand. I kept thrusting, but pressed my thumb against her clit, teasing it each time my fingers reached deeper.

Her eyes followed the flame as I tipped a little wax onto the sensitive skin below her belly button. I kept moving lower, reaching the top of her pubic mound as I poured again, and watched the wax drip down almost to her pussy before it hardened and stopped.

I picked up a knife from the table and flipped the blade up, loving the gleam in her eyes as she divined my intentions. I trailed the flat of the blade along her rib cage until I reached a patch of wax, then I carefully worked the blade under the edge and flicked it up, exposing the red, stinging skin once more.

I had to slow my fingers moving in her pussy because as soon as the knife appeared, it felt like she was going to come. I wanted her to have to work for this orgasm. The longer the build, the better it would be.

I kept teasing her, flicking pieces of wax off with the blade and then letting it skim across her stinging skin. I knew from experience that the sensations would be overwhelming. She wanted to focus on the pleasure in her pussy, but I kept pulling her back to the stinging wax and the threat of the blade.

She shivered as I very carefully dragged the tip of the blade along her nipple, which was still in a tight little bud from my biting and pinching. She breathed heavily through her nose, closing her eyes and tipping her head back.

I used that moment of distraction to finally let all the sensations converge, thrusting my fingers hard and rubbing her clit faster as I used the knife

to reach the wax along her inner thigh, letting it get closer and closer to her pussy. I flipped the blade and pushed the warm metal of the handle against the bud of her asshole, making her jerk in surprise.

That was enough to tip her over the brink and she came around my fingers, clenching and gushing with liquid out of her pussy. I had never seen her squirt before, and she came so hard that I still sometimes fantasize about it. She surrendered to me completely, and I was equal parts honored and turned on by her trust.

When I started to untie her, she kissed each part of my skin she could reach, as though thanking me with little kisses. That quickly turned to sensual kisses once she was properly untied, until she finally dropped her knees **again** and thanked me properly, with her tongue against my pussy. 

**I PICKED UP THE LIT
CANDLE CAREFULLY AND
HELD IT OVER HER, MOVING
IT CLOSE TO HER SKIN TO
LET HER FEEL THE WARMTH
OF THE TINY FLAME.**

Jenny Nordbak is a retired dominatrix and author of "The Scarlett Letters: My Secret Year of Men in an L.A. Dungeon."





OLG
CYBERCUTIE

IN BLOOM

PHOTOGRAPHY
GERALD DE BEHR

Scarlett Bloom may look all sweet and innocent with her long limbs and doe eyes, but do not mess with this Chicago native. Scarlett is not only eloquent, independent, and tough, but she will not be walked on. Growing up in Chicago, Scarlett idolized the historical figures who propelled the civil rights movement forward, so she's got a place in her heart for Malcolm X. This natural beauty has all kinds of layers under her soft exterior.























SCARLETT BLOOM

Vital Stats:

34B-24-30

5'9"

20 years old

Hometown: Chicago, Illinois

Who were your idols growing up?

Growing up in a predominately black area, I learned a lot about black history in school. During my sophomore year, I had a very transitional period where I became more socially aware due to the political climate. I began to study the teachings of the Black Panther party and Malcolm X, and idolized the women who were the silent backbones of these movements. I've always been a huge fan-girl, too, and had a few pop-culture phases where I would fall in love with icons like Kurt Cobain or Macaulay Culkin. Once I was a more appropriate age, I really admired women who were sex symbols. Their confidence to be sexually liberated was so attractive to me, and it seemed like they led such fun lifestyles of glitz and glam. The Marilyn Monroe, Anna Nicole Smith, Megan Fox aesthetic was everything to me. I think I've tried to shape my image in the adult industry after that.

When we first discovered you, your Instagram said, "Black, not Asian." What's the deal?

I've had a lot of issues with my racial ambiguity in this industry. I had a company blatantly disregard me after clarifying that I was black and try to label me "Asian" on their site for clickbait. I felt so disrespected.

What got you into the adult industry?

I started doing clip sales first, and it was so much fun. I got scouted by my agent only a couple months later and I really liked the idea of being a part of mainstream adult films. I went to my first adult expo before signing and fell in love with the openness and inclusivity of the industry.

What was it like growing up in Chicago?

There's no place that compares to it. I've gone back at least once a month since moving to California. We're such a culture-rich city—the food, the people, and the neighborhoods. If I could be in the adult industry and still live there I would.

If you could go anywhere in the world, where would it be?

One of my dream destinations is Bali, Indonesia. It looks so peaceful and serene, and their culture seems really beautiful. I don't know that I could live there indefinitely, though. I plan to travel a lot in my lifetime.

What can a man do to impress you?

I like for a man to smell really nice upon meeting him. It's an instant turn-on. Then if he follows up with attention to detail and is well-spoken, he's got me.

Any weird addictions?

My only addictions are Mexican food and shopping. I'm constantly stopping myself from going to Target every day for absolutely no reason at all. It's so bad!

What would you do with \$10,000 if you had to spend it in three hours?

This probably sounds boring, but I'd invest it or use it as a down payment on a car or a home. Though I'd probably take care of all my online wish lists first. 🔑

Find more of Scarlett at
<https://share.myfreecams.com/scarlettbxxx>
or see more at Penthouse.com



AMERICAN WAR CINEMA IN THE 21ST CENTURY

WHAT'S THE ROLE OF
WAR MOVIES IN AN ERA OF
PERPETUAL CONFLICT?

BY MATT GALLAGHER

SOMEONE recently asked me, "Why aren't there any good movies about today's wars?"

Looking back on it, this question was, perhaps, posed to me at an unideal time. Three rum eggnogs in at a holiday party I hadn't really wanted to be at in the first place, I took the question like a dog getting its tail stepped on at midnight.

"No good movies about the wars? What? Fuck that question," I said, before deciding it was the exact right time to paraphrase Tupac. "Fuck that question as a staff, record label, and as a motherfucking crew."

The guy who'd asked it stammered out an apology, which made me feel bad. He'd just been trying to make conversation, after all, and talking with veterans can be tricky business for civilians, so I'm told. My drunken self was contributing to that gulf. My wife's diligent eyes across the room made it clear I was to PLAY NICE. So I did my best to assure him I'd been joking, and tossed out some film suggestions about modern war that I'd found engaging.

That there haven't been good films about the global war on terror isn't a rare idea. Where's the *Apocalypse Now* of Iraq? Why no *Platoon*-like epic about Afghanistan? For Christ's sake, is there even anything on 9/11 that comes close to touching what *From Here to Eternity* did for Pearl Harbor? (*Pearl Harbor* itself, though, sucked donkey balls. I will die on that hill. Anyhow.)

And it's not just random dudes at holiday parties saying this. In late 2018, even Hollywood golden man Tom Hanks voiced the opinion. "I don't know that Hollywood could create an authentic story about Iraq or Afghanistan," he said at a Washington gala for the Elizabeth Dole Foundation. "We argue about this all the time, what's going to be the venue for the story that needs to be told."

Far be it for me to disagree with Captain Miller of *Saving Private Ryan* fame, but, well, fuck it. I am. Not only do I think the folks in Hollywoodland can make good films about modern warfare, I think it's already been done (with room for improvement, as time goes on and, well, maybe the wars actually end?).

Here's a completely subjective list of one great and four pretty good-to-goodish works that meet the ever-vaunted Gallagher Quality Threshold.

PHOTO: SHUTTERSTOCK.COM / BY ROCKSWEEPER



THAT THERE HAVEN'T BEEN GOOD FILMS ABOUT THE GLOBAL WAR ON TERROR ISN'T A RARE IDEA. WHERE'S THE *APOCALYPSE NOW* OF IRAQ? WHY NO *PLATOON*-LIKE EPIC ABOUT AFGHANISTAN?

Three Kings (1999)

Two decades old and still the GOAT of modern war flicks. What's amazing about *Three Kings* is how prescient it is—it's set during Desert Storm, but manages to foresee the dark ambiguities, sectarian violence, and ruin that awaited Babylon in coming years. There's blood, there's treasure, and sex between a Green Beret and an enterprising reporter looking for a tip. (*Womp womp.*) Throw in a killer script and some great performances by Ice Cube and Spike Jonze, and we've got ourselves an underrated classic of the genre.

American Sniper (2014)

I'll admit to a real love-hate relationship with Clint Eastwood's *American Sniper*. It's a splendidly made film from an aesthetic perspective, and the end scene is damn near perfect. But beyond the shine, given the attention it received and its star-studded cast, it lingers four years later as a huge opportunity wasted to challenge people's mind-sets about the war on terror, rather than reinforcing them. Chris Kyle the man was way more interesting than Bradley Cooper's stoic, sheepdog John Wayne impression made him out to be: Kyle was funny, tender sometimes, and sometimes a really obvious, really awful braggart and liar. Super complicated, super raw, super honest, always interesting. A man that interesting deserved a war film about him as he actually was.

Argo (2012)

Ostensibly about the 1979 U.S. hostage crisis in Tehran, *Argo* pulsates with contemporary foreign policy issues in a wild, rollicking story that might make you forgive Ben Affleck for his stone-voiced turn at Batman. Based on a real-life event known as "the Canadian Caper," *Argo* accomplishes the rare double feat of getting viewers to root for the CIA while also providing some perspective on the "others" who label America the Great Satan. Is it coincidence that two of the best films about the war on terror are technically set before it commenced? Reader, it is not! History needs perspective, and perspective can often serve as art's lifeblood. Some famous dead poet said that, I think?

Sand Castle (2017)

A Netflix film, *Sand Castle* offers a gritty, grunt-view window on Iraq that's common in our contemporary war literature but, curiously, hasn't penetrated much of television or film. (Pet theory: Americans like soldiers in a vague, cipher-like way, but have a harder time reconciling those sanitized notions with the realities of angry, rough men and women looking to carry out violence for our state.) *Sand Castle*'s not without its faults—too much verisimilitude, not enough narrative arc, at least to these eyes—but screenwriter and U.S. Army veteran of Iraq Chris Roessner deserves a heap of credit for breaking through the civilian-military divides of twenty-first-century America and getting this thing made. Having talented, creative veterans like him operating in the arts is vital to our cultural and societal understanding of just what the hell has been going on since 9/11. Rich people reading this: Give that man some money to make his next film, this *Penthouse* columnist demands it to be so.

Homecoming (2018)

Yeah, yeah, this is a television series and not a film, and I'm cheating on my own list. Who cares? I wanted to write about *Homecoming*. It's on Amazon Video! It stars Julia Roberts! And honest to Christ, it's one of the more powerful and innovative works of antiwar art I've come across in years. Set in Florida at a private contractor's medical facilities devoted to "curing" veterans' post-traumatic stress, *Homecoming* is more thriller than drama, and benefits immensely from the tonal shifts therein. It doesn't use combat or post-traumatic stress as much more than backdrop, allowing the storytelling to free itself up for what's happening here, stateside. It's streamable in that addictive, lose-a-weekend sort of way; give it a run and let the commentary about the military-industrial complex's exploitation of young people and their ideas of soldiering soak in after the fact. 🔑

Matt Gallagher is a U.S. Army veteran of Iraq and the author of the novel "Youngblood" (Atria/Simon & Schuster).

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PHOTOGRAPHY & STYLING
LINDSEY BYRNES

Hollywood's new "It Girl," comedian and actress Ester Steinberg, is a J-Date user's wet dream, but she's even more spectacular when you get her in front of the camera. Her new comedy album, *Hebrew School Dropout*, debuts in mid-March and (spoiler alert) it's totally hilarious.





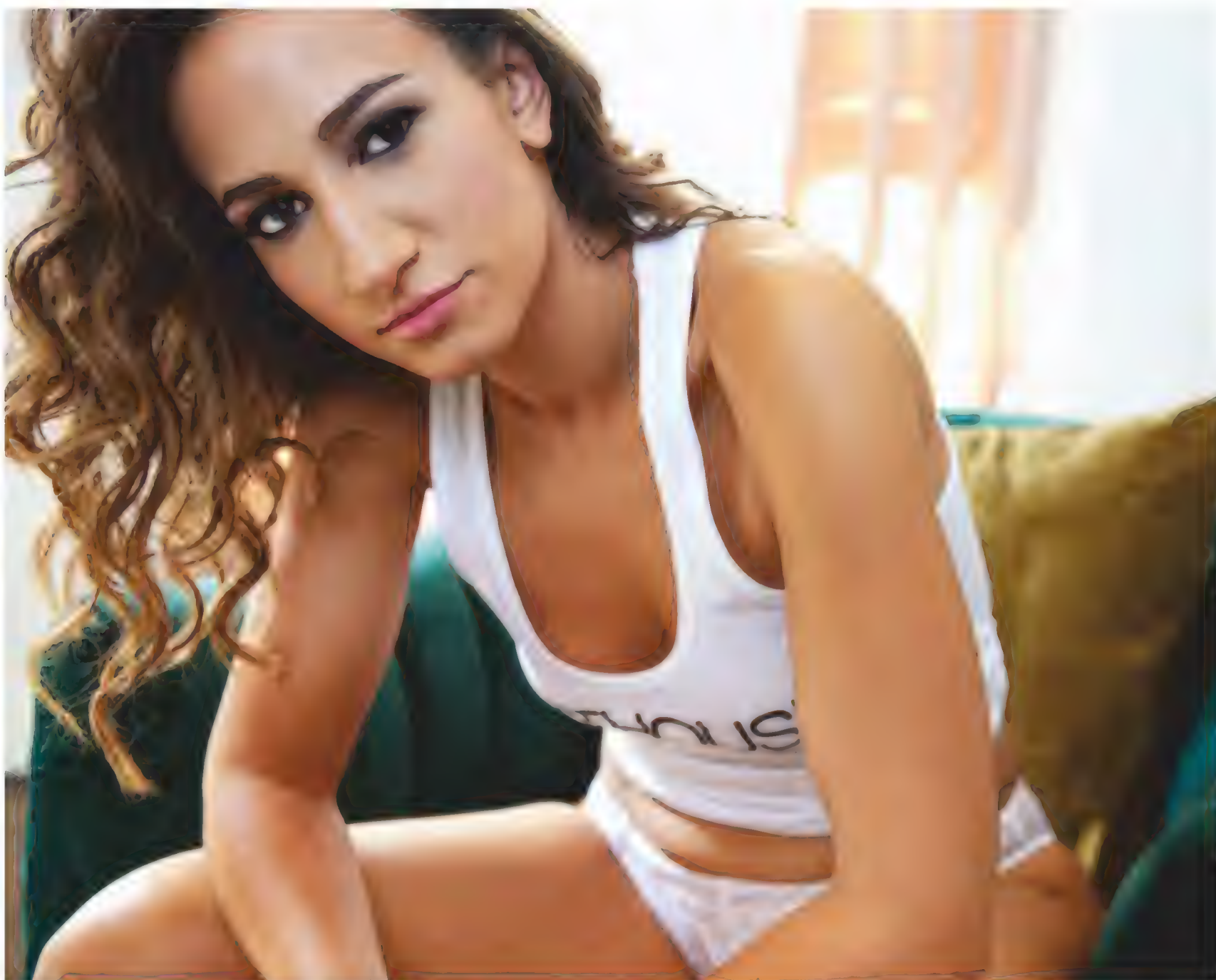












Ester wears Felina, Victoria's Secret, Penthouse, and vintage Levi's.



INSIDE THE CHURCH OF SCIENTOLOGY

AN EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW WITH L. RON HUBBARD JR.

JUNE 1983

“Scientology and all the other cults are one-dimensional, and we live in a three-dimensional world. Cults are as dangerous as drugs. They commit the highest crime: the rape of the soul.”
—L. Ron Hubbard Jr.

FOR more than 20 years, L. Ron Hubbard Jr. has been a man on the run. He has changed residences, occupations, and even his name in 1972 to “Ron DeWolf” to escape what he alleges to be the retribution and wrath of his father and his father’s organization—the Church of Scientology.

His father, L. Ron Hubbard Sr., founder and leader of Scientology, has been a figure of controversy and mystery, as has been his organization, for more than a generation. Its detractors have called it the “granddaddy” and the worst of all the religious cults that have sprung up over the last generation. Its advocates—and there are thousands—swear that the church is the avenue for human perfection and happiness. Millions of words have been written for and against Scientology. Just what is the truth?

L. Ron Hubbard Sr. and the very few who have worked at the highest echelons of the organization have never spoken publicly about the workings and finances of the Church of Scientology. Firsthand allegations about coercion, blackmail, and just how billions of dollars the organization is said to possess have been accrued and spent is lacking—that is, until very recently. In an extraordinary petition brought November 10, 1982, in Superior Court in Riverside, California, by L. Ron Hubbard Jr. to prove that his father is dead and that his heirs should receive the tens of millions of dollars being dissipated from his estate, some of the mystery about Scientology has begun to unravel. Some of the details are shocking.

L. Ron Hubbard Jr. is a survivor. His appearance on Earth, May 7, 1934, was the result of failed abortion rituals by his father, and Ron, after only six and a half months in the womb and at 2.2 pounds, entered the world. His mother, Margaret (“Polly”) Grubb, was to have one more child, Catherine May, before her husband ditched her in 1946 to enter into a bigamous marriage with Sarah Northrup. A half sister, Alexis Valerie, survived that union. Soon after that, the founder of Scientology married Mary Sue Whipp, the current Mrs. L. Ron Hubbard Sr., who at this writing is serving four years in federal prison for stealing government documents. There were four children: Diana and Quentin, who died under mysterious circumstances in 1976; Arthur, who has been missing for several years; and Suzette.

Ron Jr. says that he remembers much of his childhood. He claims to recall, at age 6, a vivid scene of his father performing an abortion ritual on his mother with a coat hanger. He remembers that when he was 10 years old, his father, in an attempt to get his son in tune with his black-magic worship, laced the young Hubbard’s bubble gum with phenobarbital. Drugs were an important part of Ron Jr.’s growing up, as his father believed that they were the best way to get closer to Satan.

Ron Jr. also recalls a hard-drinking, drug-abusing father who would mistreat his mother and other women, but who, when under the influence, would delight in telling his son all of his exploits. Finally, Ron Jr. remembers his father as a “broke science-fiction writer” who espoused that the road to riches and glory lay in selling religion to the masses.

Nineteen fifty was a watershed year for the 16-year-old Ron Jr., when his father’s book, *Dianetics: The Modern Science of Mental Health*, was published. While in the 1980s self-help books hold little novelty, *Dianetics* was a pioneer of that genre. Happiness in 1950 could be a reality, if only one practiced the strange amalgam of science fiction and psychoanalysis offered in the senior Hubbard’s best seller. It was an unexpected success for Hubbard, then living in New Jersey, when the mailman would deliver daily sacks of letters from the unhappy and desperate who had read the book and wanted L. Ron Hubbard to take them to the promised land. It was a dream come true—a science-fiction writer who not only created a world of fantasy but packaged it and sold it as reality.



In 1950, L. Ron Hubbard opened a Dianetics clinic, where the hopeful and newly converted could come, for a fee, and their ills—from loneliness to cancer—would be cured. Dianetics was the new Scientific Revolution, and L. Ron Hubbard was its prophet.

Scientology is essentially a self-help therapy. It is based on the premise that by recalling negative experiences or “engrams,” a person can free himself from repressed feelings that cripple his life. This liberation process is assisted by a counselor called an “auditor,” who charges up to hundreds of dollars a session. The auditor’s basic aid is the “E-meter,” a skin galvanometer that is said to help him ascertain the problems of his client.

Soon the New Jersey authorities and the American Medical Association challenged the veracity of the new faith. L. Ron Hubbard met the challenge by fleeing the state—not the last time this was to happen. A frequent memory of Ron Jr. is his father’s packing up shoe boxes with thousands of dollars to move on to greener and safer pastures.

Coming into manhood in the early fifties, Ron Jr. learned the virtues of flimflam and keeping one step ahead of the law and creditors. But he admits that he accepted his father’s teachings and example as correct. By the time his father started the modern Church of Scientology in Arizona and New Jersey in 1953, young Hubbard was not only a disciple but a willing organizer in the new movement. He was to be so throughout the 1950s.

While Ron Jr. may never have questioned his father and the mushrooming cult of Scientology, a growing uneasiness began to take hold of him. In 1953 he married Henrietta, whom he never allowed to join the church. They were to have six children—Deborah, Leif, Esther, Eric, Harry, and Alex, age 12, who suffers from Down’s Syndrome—plus six grandchildren, none of whom were ever members of Scientology. The importance of family life, especially in contrast to his own upbringing, caused Ron Jr. to question his life as a member of Scientology, albeit privately.

Other factors also caused Ron Jr. to think about breaking away from the cult that was dominating his life. His father’s autocratic and arbitrary control of Scientology often led to violence, and the young Hubbard began to be disturbed by his own participation. Certain questionable transactions involving drug dealing and the transfer of large sums of money abroad by his father was another troubling factor. But, he says, the breaking point came over his father’s involvement with the Russians. Finally, in 1959, when his father was in Australia, Ron, his wife, and two children fled the Church of Scientology.

According to Ron Jr., life was to become a nightmarish existence. No matter where the family went in the United States, it would not take long for a member of the organization to find them. Because he knew too much about Scientology and its founder, Ron says, attempts were made to ensure his silence. For many years, L. Ron Hubbard Jr. kept a low profile.

But keeping silent did not end Ron’s terror of what his father and followers might do to him and his family. In 1976, his half brother Quentin died under mysterious circumstances that Ron is certain was murder. Quentin, a son of Scientology’s leader, was a drug abuser and an embarrassment to his father. Whether all these questions

were signs of paranoia finally became less important to Ron than discovering, once and for all, the truth about his father.

In 1980, Ron became convinced that his father was dead, and that his death was being kept a secret by the Church of Scientology, lest knowledge of his death cause chaos in the organization. He filed his petition and an open war was declared. Should he win the suit by proving that his father is either dead or incompetent, Ron and other family members will receive the millions of dollars believed to be part of L. Ron Hubbard’s estate.

For some 30 years, stories, rumors, and innuendo about the Church of Scientology have been whispered, and sometimes reported, internationally. Obviously, the final judgment of L. Ron Hubbard Jr. and his allegations remains to be made. But because of his high-level involvement for such a long time with this controversial organization, he himself has become a newsworthy figure.

To find out what this man at the center of an international firestorm is like, *Penthouse* sent contributing editor Allan Sonnenschein to Carson City, Nevada, where he met Hubbard in the small three-bedroom apartment in which he lives (he manages the apartment complex). “DeWolf,” Sonnenschein told us, “is a stocky and ruddy-complexioned man, with thinning red hair. Despite his almost continuous involvement with lawyers on both sides of his case, DeWolf was very relaxed during the several hours I spent with him. He seemed convinced that his desire to tell his story after all these years was of vital importance...and he spoke with a firmness and intensity befitting a person who claims to be risking his life by speaking out.”

Because of the seriousness of Mr. DeWolf’s charges and because his father has affected the lives of thousands, if not millions, of people, *Penthouse* will be launching an independent investigation of these charges. The results will be published in a forthcoming issue.

Penthouse: Before you filed your lawsuit and began speaking openly about Scientology, there was very little news of it in the media. Why do you think there has been so little investigation of Scientology?

Hubbard: It’s very simple. Scientology has always had a “fair-game doctrine”—a policy of doing absolutely anything to stop an investigation or publication of a critical article in a magazine or newspaper. They have run some incredible operations on the several people who have tried to write books about Scientology. It was almost like a terror campaign. First they’d try throwing every possible lawsuit at the reporter or newspaper. We had a team of attorneys to do just that. The goal was to destroy the enemy. So the solution was always to attack, full-bore, with every possible resource, from every angle, instantaneously. It can certainly be overwhelming. A guy would get slapped with 27 lawsuits, and our lawyers would start deposing absolutely anybody who ever knew the man, digging up dirt while at the same time putting together an operation that would get him into further trouble. I know of one case, concerning Paulette Cooper, who wrote a book called *The Scandal of Scientology*, in which they spent almost

\$500,000 trying to destroy her.

Penthouse: So you think the press was intimidated?

Hubbard: Oh, absolutely. All the way through, since the fifties. I found this very sad. It seemed very much like Germany in the thirties. The freedom of the press seemed buried. They got scared. They thought, *Well, who wants to go through ten years of lawsuits, just because we printed the name L. Ron Hubbard?* I'm delighted to see that *Penthouse* has the balls to print this interview.

Penthouse: Why do you think it's so risky?

Hubbard: My father drilled into all of us: Don't go to court thinking to win a lawsuit. You go to court to harass, to delay, to exhaust the enemy financially, physically, mentally. You file every motion you can think of and you just lock them up in court. The courts, for my father, were never used to seek justice or redress, but to destroy the people he thought were enemies, to prevent negative stories from appearing. He just wanted complete control of the press—and got it.

Penthouse: What exactly is Scientology?

Hubbard: Scientology is a power- and money- and intelligence-gathering game. To use common, everyday English, Scientology says that you and I and everybody else willed ourselves into being hundreds of trillions of years ago—just by deciding to be. We willed ourselves into being ourselves. Through wild space games, interaction, fights, and wars in the grand science-fiction tradition, we created this universe—all the matter, energy, space, and time of this universe. And so through these trillions of years, we have become the effect of our own cause and we now find ourselves trapped in bodies. So the idea of Scientology “auditing” or “counseling” or “processing” is to free yourself from your body and to return you to the original godlike state or, in Scientology jargon, an Operating Thetan—O.T. We are all fallen gods, according to Scientology, and the goal is to be returned to that state.

Penthouse: And what is the Church of Scientology?

Hubbard: It's one of my father's many organizations. It was formed in 1953, basically to avoid the harassment of my father by the medical profession and the IRS. The idea of Scientology didn't really exist before that point as a religion, but my father hit upon turning it into a church after he started feeling pressured.

Penthouse: Didn't your father have any interest in helping people?

Hubbard: No.

Penthouse: Never?

Hubbard: My father started out as a broke science-fiction writer. He was always broke in the late 1940s. He told me and a lot of other people that the way to make a million was to start a religion. Then he wrote the book *Dianetics: The Modern Science of Mental Health* while he was in

Bayhead, New Jersey. When we later visited Bayhead, in about 1953, we were walking around and reminiscing—he told me that he had written the book in one month.

Penthouse: There was no church when he wrote the book?

Hubbard: Oh, no, no. You see, his goal was basically to write the book, take the money, and run. But in 1950, this was the first major book of do-it-yourself psychotherapy, and it became a runaway best seller. He kept getting, literally, mail trucks full of mail. And so he and some other people, including J. W. Campbell, the editor of *Astounding Science Fiction*, started the Dianetics Research Foundation in Elizabeth, New Jersey. And the post office kept backing up and just dumping mail sacks into the building. The foundation had a staff that just ran through the envelopes and threw away anything that didn't have any money in it.

Penthouse: People sent money?

Hubbard: Yeah, they wanted training and further Dianetic auditing, Dianetic processing. It was just an incredible avalanche.

Penthouse: Did he write the book off the top of his head? Did he do any real research?

Hubbard: No research at all. When he has answered that question over the years, his answer has changed according to which biography he was writing. Sometimes he used to write a new biography every week. He usually said that he had put 30 years of research into the book. But no, he did not.

What he did, really, was take bits and pieces from other people and put them together in a blender and stir them all

up—and out came *Dianetics*! All the examples in the book—some 200 “real-life experiences”—were just the result of his obsessions with abortions and unconscious states.... In fact, the vast majority of those incidents were invented off the top of his head. The rest stem from his own secret life, which was deeply involved in the occult and black magic. That involvement goes back to when he was 16, living in Washington, D.C. He got hold of Aleister Crowley's *The Book of Law*. He was very interested in several things that were the creation of what some people call the Moon Child. It was basically an attempt to create an immaculate conception—except by Satan rather than by God.

Another important idea was the creation of what they call embryo implants—of getting a satanic or demonic spirit to inhabit the body of a fetus. This would come about as a result of black-magic rituals, which included the use of hypnosis, drugs, and other dangerous and destructive practices. One of the important things was to destroy the evidence if you failed at this immaculate conception. That's how my father became obsessed with abortions. I have a memory of this that goes back to when I was 6 years old. It is certainly a problem for my father and for Scientology that I remember this. It was around 1939, 1940, that I watched my father doing something to my mother. She was lying on the bed and he was sitting on her, facing her feet. He had

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a coat hanger in his hand. There was blood all over the place. I remember my father shouting at me, "Go back to bed!" A little while later a doctor came and took her off to the hospital. She didn't talk about it for quite a number of years. Neither did my father.

Penthouse: He was trying to perform an abortion?

Hubbard: According to him and my mother, he tried to do it with me. I was born at six and a half months and weighed two pounds, two ounces. I mean, I wasn't born; this is what came out as a result of their attempt to abort me. It happened during a night of partying—he got involved in trying to do a black-magic number. Also, I've got to complete this by saying that he thought of himself as the Beast 666 Incarnate.

Penthouse: The devil?

Hubbard: Yes. The Antichrist. Aleister Crowley thought of himself as such. And when Crowley died in 1947, my father then decided that he should wear the cloak of the beast and become the most powerful being in the universe.

Penthouse: You were 16 years old at that time. What did you believe in?

Hubbard: I believed in Satanism. There was no other religion in the house! Scientology and black magic. What a lot of people don't realize is that Scientology is black magic that is just spread out over a long time period. To perform black magic generally takes a few hours or, at most, a few weeks. But in Scientology it's stretched out over a lifetime, and so you don't see it. Black magic is the inner core of Scientology—and it is probably the only part of Scientology that really works.

Also, you've got to realize that my father did not worship Satan. He thought he was Satan. He was one with Satan. He had a direct pipeline of communication and power with him. My father wouldn't have worshiped anything. I mean, when you think you're the most powerful being in the universe, you have no respect for anything, let alone worship.

Penthouse: Let's get back to how you saw Scientology working on an individual basis. What if someone wrote to your father asking if he could cure their cancer?

Hubbard: He'd say, Oh, yes, he could handle that.

Penthouse: And what would be the charge for curing cancer?

Hubbard: Back in those days it was anywhere from \$10 to

\$25 an hour. Now it's up to \$300 or more an hour.

Penthouse: What exactly did that pay for?

Hubbard: To be audited. In the old days, the patient would lie on a couch and the auditor would sit in a chair and counsel. The words "auditing," "counseling," and "processing" are really the same in Scientology.

Penthouse: What would be discussed?

Hubbard: They would say that the cancer and its cure are just incidental to the main problem of one's "spiritual development." And according to Dianetics and Scientology, the explanation for cancer is basically that you have a sex problem.

Penthouse: A sex problem?

Hubbard: Right.

Penthouse: How did he figure that?

Hubbard: Quite simply, according to my father. Cancer is basically cells that are dividing out of control, and so, according to my father, the problem is a sexual thing. Therefore the cancer is rooted in a sexual problem. If you have cancer, you are really screwed up on sex. So what would happen in this auditing—I don't know what it's like now, but it's probably just the same as in the old days—is that they would address a guy's entire sex life. There was certainly an incredible preoccupation, in Dianetics and Scientology, about sex. It was a great means of control. You have complete control of someone if you have every detail of his sex life and fantasy life on record.

Penthouse: What if someone who went through the training just wanted to drop out?

Hubbard: There was no way. There were thousands of people, back in the fifties, who would come in and receive various levels of training, such as a Hubbard Certified Auditor's Certificate or a Bachelor of Scientology or a Doctorate of Scientology, and if they didn't toe the mark as my father wanted them to, then we would cancel their certificates. And then he would notify the Scientologists in the area where the man lived not to have anything to do with him, to disconnect from him. And if information was available about him, we would spread that information around to his wife, his family, his children, where he worked, everywhere. It was straight blackmail. It was "Stay in the fold or else." Then, later on, they developed what they called an ethics review board. If you didn't toe the mark,



you'd be put on trial in front of a kangaroo court and then be sentenced to maybe scrub floors. I heard that you had to walk around with a dirty rag tied around your arm like a badge. You could be made to do anything. You would be locked in a chain locker or handcuffed to a bed. This is in later years. We were simpler in the fifties, more direct. I just went out and beat 'em up.

Penthouse: Physical beatings?

Hubbard: Yeah. We'd strong-arm them, did it myself. And you had to realize that I weighed around 240 pounds in those days. When I taught Scientology, no students ever blew off my courses! I would go out and physically retrieve my students.

You know, the Scientologists are now trying to make me out to be the worst person since Attila the Hun. They forget that when I was director of training for the organization, I trained literally thousands of people. I created a lot of the Scientology processes and procedures throughout the fifties. I really helped create and run the organization. I was very deeply involved, very directly, for seven years, during its formulation and building. So I find their attempts to discredit me amusing.

I used to have a thing about saying that nobody ever ran out of my courses. If you think est [Erhard Seminars Training] is tough, you ought to have taken courses under me in the fifties!

Penthouse: What would happen if someone went to your class, decided it was bullshit, and never came back?

Hubbard: If you signed up for a course and you came to my class, I'd keep you there or go physically retrieve you if you left.

Penthouse: You'd already gotten the money, so why did you bother?

Hubbard: Because I thought I was all-knowing, all-powerful—totally arrogant and egotistical—for one thing. I was quite insufferable.

Penthouse: Your father knew this was going on?

Hubbard: Well, sure. Nobody did a thing in Scientology without his direct knowledge or consent or without his orders.

Penthouse: Did it ever go beyond these physical beatings?

Hubbard: I remember locking one girl up in a shack out in the desert for at least a couple of weeks.

Penthouse: Why were things like this never publicized?

Hubbard: Because the same reign of terror that occurred under Robespierre and Hitler occurred back then in the fifties, as it occurs now. You must realize that there is very little actual courage in this world. It's pretty easy to bend people around. It doesn't take much to shut people up, it really doesn't. In the fifties, all I had to do was call a guy up on the telephone and say, "Well, I think your wife would like to know about your mistress." The response would be a shocked "Oh, my God!" I'd say, "Well, nobody really

wants to divulge that kind of information. I think it would be absolutely terrible if your wife found out, so I'm going to make absolutely sure that she doesn't find out. Now, if you just drop in here for a little more auditing.... Now you know in your heart that the critical things you've been saying about Scientology are just vindictive. They're not really true in your heart. You know that, don't you?" And the guy says, "Yeah, sure, I sure do know that!"

And then, if Scientologists couldn't blackmail you, they'd create some dirt on you through their "special operations." There were quite a few of those operations. This one, for example, happened recently. I wasn't involved in it, but Scientologists tried to get an assistant attorney general of the state of California embroiled in a fake operation where a Scientologist pretended to be a nun and pretended to get pregnant by him and filed papers against him. Then in another scheme, they tried to set up the mayor of Clearwater, Florida, for a fake hit-and-run accident. I could give you operation after operation that they set up like this.

Penthouse: This has been going on since the fifties?

Hubbard: Sure. It was pretty tame back then compared to very sophisticated operations like they have now. When we hid assets, for example—I remember being in Philadelphia when the FBI and the U.S. Marshall's Office were after my father on a contempt-of-court charge. There I was, running across town with my father with our complete mailing list and a suitcase full of money! Heading for the hills!

Penthouse: Where did the money end up?

Hubbard: A lot of it went abroad. But my father always kept a great deal of it around his bedroom so that he could flee at a moment's notice. In shoe boxes. He distrusted banks.

Penthouse: What kind of money are we talking about?

Hubbard: Back then? Hundreds of thousands at least. The last time I saw my father, in 1959, he mentioned that he had at least \$20 million salted away.

Penthouse: Did he invest the money?

Hubbard: No. He wanted to stay really liquid. Very fluid, so he could cut and run at any time.

Penthouse: Where did all this money come from? How much did it cost to be audited, in Scientology parlance?

Hubbard: It cost as much as a person had. He had to stay in the organization, getting audited higher and higher, until he paid us as much as he had. People would sell their house, their car, convert their stocks and securities into cash, and turn it all over to Scientology.

Penthouse: What did you promise them for this price?

Hubbard: We promised them the moon and then demonstrated a way to get there. They would sell their soul for that. We were telling someone that they could have the power of a god—that's what we were telling them.

"YOU MUST REALIZE THAT THERE IS VERY LITTLE ACTUAL COURAGE IN THIS WORLD. IT'S PRETTY EASY TO BEND PEOPLE AROUND. IT DOESN'T TAKE MUCH TO SHUT PEOPLE UP, IT REALLY DOESN'T."

Penthouse: What kind of people were tempted by this promise?

Hubbard: A whole range of people. People who wanted to raise their IQ, to feel better, to solve their problems. You also got people who wished to lord it over other people in the use of power. Remember, it's a power game, a matter of climbing a pyramidal hierarchy to the top, and it's who you can step on to get more power that counts. It appeals a great deal to neurotics. And to people who are greedy. It appeals a great deal to Americans, I think, because they tend to believe in instant everything, from instant coffee to instant nirvana. By just saying a few magic words or by doing a few assignments, one can become a god. People believe this. You see, Scientology doesn't really address the soul; it addresses the ego. What happens in Scientology is that a person's ego gets pumped up by this science-fiction fantasy helium into universe-sized proportions. And this is very appealing. It is especially appealing to the intelligentsia of this country, who are made to feel that they are the most highly intelligent people, when in actual fact, from an emotional standpoint, they are completely stupid. Fine professors, doctors, scientists, people involved in the arts and sciences, would fall into Scientology like you wouldn't believe. It appealed to their intellectual level and buttressed their emotional weaknesses. You show me a professor and I revert back to the fifties; I just kick him in the head, eat him for breakfast.

Penthouse: Did it attract young people as much as cults today?

Hubbard: Yes. We attracted quite a few hippies but we tried to stay away from them, because they didn't have any money.

Penthouse: A poor man can't be a Scientologist?

Hubbard: No, oh no.

Penthouse: What do you think of the great popularity of cults in this country?

Hubbard: I think they're very dangerous and destructive. I don't think that anyone should think for you. And that's exactly what cults do. All cults, including Scientology, say, "I am your mind, I am your brain. I've done all the work for you. I've laid the path open for you. All you have to do is turn your mind off and walk down the path I have created." Well, I have learned that there's great strength in diversity, that a clamorous discussion or debate is very healthy and should be encouraged. That's why I like our political setup in the United States: simply because you can fight and argue

and jump up and down and shout and scream and have all kinds of viewpoints, regardless of how wrongheaded or ridiculous they might be. People here don't have to give up their right to perceive things the way they believe. Scientology and all the other cults are one-dimensional, and we live in a three-dimensional world. Cults are as dangerous as drugs. They commit the highest crime: the rape of the soul.

Penthouse: You mentioned that Scientology attracted a great many well-known or important people. Can you give us some examples?

Hubbard: Two of the people we were involved with in the late fifties in England were Errol Flynn and a man who was high up in the Labor Party at the time.

My father and Errol Flynn were very similar. They were only interested in money, sex, booze, and drugs. At that time, in the late fifties, Flynn was pretty much a burned-out hulk. But he was involved in smuggling deals with my father: gold from the Mediterranean, and some drugs—mostly cocaine.

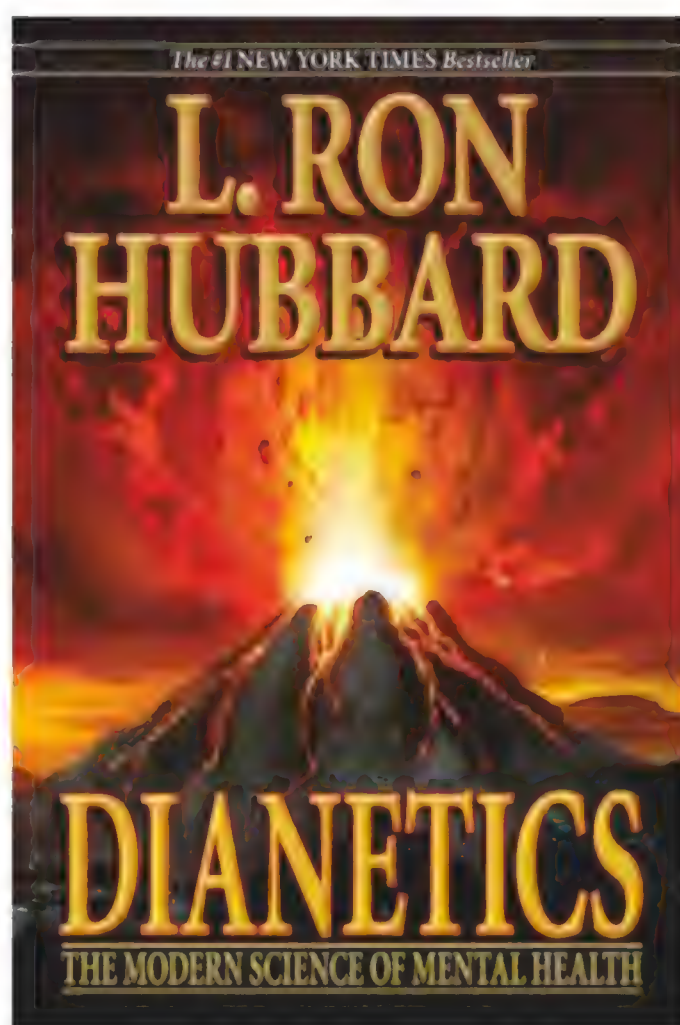
They were both just a little larger than life. I had to admire my father from one standpoint. As I've said, he was a down-and-out, broke science-fiction writer, and then he writes one book of science fiction and convinces the world it's true. He sells it to millions of people and gets billions of dollars and everyone thinks he's some sort of deity. He was really bigger than life. Flynn was like that, too. You could say many negative things about the two of them, but they did as they pleased and lived as they pleased. It was always fun to sit there at dinner and listen to these two guys rap. Wild people.

Errol Flynn was like my father also in that he would do anything for money. He would take anything to bed—boys, girls. Fifty-year-old women, 10-year-old boys. Flynn and my father had insatiable appetites. Tons of mistresses. They lived very high on the hog.

Penthouse: And what about this Labor Party official?

Hubbard: He was a double agent for the KGB and for the British intelligence agency MI5. He was also a raging homosexual. He wanted my father to use his black-magic, soul-cracking brainwashing techniques on young boys. He wanted these boys as his own sexual slaves. He wanted to use my father's techniques to crack people's heads open because he was very influential in and around the British government—plus he was selling information to the Russians. And so was my father.

Penthouse: Your father was selling information to the Soviets?



Hubbard: Yes. That's where my father got the money to buy St. Hill Manor in East Grinstead, Sussex, which is the English headquarters of Scientology today.

Penthouse: What information did your father have to sell the Soviet government?

Hubbard: He didn't do any spying himself. What he normally did was allow these strange little people to go into the offices and into his home at odd hours of the night. He told me that he was allowing the KGB to go through our files, and that he was charging £40,000 for it. This was the money he used for the purchase of St. Hill Manor.

Penthouse: Do you know any specific information that the KGB got from your father that might have been harmful to security?

Hubbard: The plans for an infrared heatseeking missile in the early fifties. They obtained the information by extensive auditing of the guy who was one of the head engineers. There were great infiltrations, clear to this day. There has always been an inordinate interest on the part of Scientology in military and government personnel. There's no way for me to prove it sitting here, but I believe that the KGB trained East German agents who came via Denmark to London to the United States who were, supposedly, Scientologists. They made very good Scientologists. They were very well trained.

Penthouse: Did your father do this just for money?

Hubbard: Yes. The more he made, the more he wanted. He became greedy. He was really just interested in the use of money and power, wherever it was or whosoever's it was. Morality and politics made no difference to him at all.

Penthouse: Did the Labor Party official get any of his young men via Scientology?

Hubbard: Yes. The British were ripe for Scientology. The British school system fosters lesbianism and homosexuality, because from the time you're born until you're in your twenties, all you see is the same sex. The schools are so segregated. And you'll notice in Scientology the focus on sex. Sex, sex, sex. The first thing we wanted to know about someone we were auditing was his sexual deviations. You know, in actual fact, very few people exclusively practice missionary-style sex. So all you've got to do is find a person's kinks, whatever they might be. Their dreams and their fantasies. And if you find that central core, their sexual drives and desires and fantasies, then you can fit a ring through their noses and take them anywhere. You promise to fulfill their fantasies or you threaten to expose them—very simple. And people do have outrageous sexual fantasies. Nothing wrong with that—I'm the last guy on Earth who should make a value judgment about somebody's sexual practices. But once you find their sexual core, you've got them. And you find this by brainwashing, through auditing, through interrogation, investigations, following them, photographing them, tapping their phones, whatever.

Penthouse: You did all that?

Hubbard: Sure.

Penthouse: Were there any other high-level British

government people in Scientology?

Hubbard: There was a member of Winston Churchill's medical staff. We had him by the balls.

Penthouse: Did he give you any information about Churchill?

Hubbard: Yes, certainly. You see, these people didn't realize where their information was going. They always thought that in Scientology auditing they had the priest/confessor's confidentiality—but it was never that way. People just assumed it, and still do. But everybody knew what was in everybody's files.

Penthouse: What was the first example you can remember of your father's espionage activity?

Hubbard: I remember one day in 1944 when he came home from the naval base where he was stationed in Oregon with a big, gray metal box under his arm. He put it in our little attached garage and put a tarp over it. That weekend a couple of funny little guys came over to the house. I remember it was summer and they were wearing heavy woolen overcoats—dark brown overcoats. It stuck in my mind: *What are they doing wearing overcoats when it's hotter than hell?* I was only about 10 at the time. Anyway, these big, sweating guys take the box and put it in their car and drive off. But before they'd come, I'd snuck a look in the box. It had this strange looking object in it. I didn't know what the hell it was.

Later on, in the fifties, I was walking through a war surplus store and I suddenly saw an object that was just like the one I'd seen in the box. It was the heart of the radar. During the war—when those men took it from our garage—it was super-secret, super-valuable, worth thousands of dollars. I remember that people were told to commit suicide if it ever got captured in order to blow it up.

Then, in 1955, I went to work in the Scientology office in London. I noticed a woman in the office doing strange things with strange people in the office, so I investigated her. I found out she was a cardcarrying member of the Communist Party. I got very angry at her and broke into her apartment, where I found dozens of little code pads. They looked like little milk pads with a whole mess of letters and numbers on them. I had people follow her to the Russian Embassy. I finally wrote a long report to my father about her. He was furious. He told me not to investigate anymore, not to write anymore, not to tell anyone what I had found out, to destroy all my evidence. I yelled at him, "The goddamn Russians are running around the office and doing God knows what!" He yelled back, "I want 'em there!" He told me that she was placed there by the KGB with his knowledge and consent. This really bothered me. My grandfather, who was a lieutenant commander in the navy, had impressed me with his red-white-and-blue honor and integrity. He was an officer of the old school, 180 degrees different from my father. In fact, I credit him a great deal with my ability to get rid of Scientology and get my head straightened out, because his patriotism had gotten through to me and made me sour on what my father was doing in dealing with the Russians.

Penthouse: Was this why you became disenchanted with Scientology?

Hubbard: It was the beginning. I began to see that my

father was a sick, sadistic, vicious man. I saw more and more parallels between his behavior and what I read about the way Hitler thought and acted. I was realizing that my father really wanted to destroy his enemies and take over the world. Whoever was perceived as his enemy had to be destroyed, including me. This “fair game” policy since the beginning. The organization couldn’t exist without it. It keeps people very quiet.

Penthouse: Do you mean killed?

Hubbard: Well, he didn’t really want people killed, because how could you really destroy them if you just killed them? What he wanted to do was to destroy their lives, their families, their reputations, their jobs, their money, everything. My father was the type of person who, when it came to destruction, wanted to keep you alive for as long as possible, to torture you, punish you. If he chose to destroy you, he would love to see you lying in the gutter, strung out on booze and drugs, rolling in your own vomit, with your wife and children gone forever; no job, no money. He’d enjoy walking by and kicking you and saying to other people, “Look what I did to this man!” He’s the kind of man who would pull the wings off flies and watch them stumble around. You see, this fits in with his Scientology beliefs, also. He felt that if you just died, your spirit would go out and get another body to live in. By destroying an enemy that way, you’d be doing him a favor. You were letting him out from under the thumb of L. Ron Hubbard, you see?

Penthouse: It’s been said that many Scientologists have similar philosophies.

Hubbard: Yes. Many are sadistic, just like he was. Very Teutonic, very Gestapo.

Penthouse: Do you think they would stop at murder?

Hubbard: Many wouldn’t. The one super-secret sentence that Scientology is built on is: “Do as thou wilt.” That is the whole of the law. It also comes from the black magic, from Aleister Crowley. It means that you are a law unto yourself, that you are above the law, that you create your own law. You are above any other human considerations. Since you came into being by an act of will, you can do anything you will. If you decide to go out and kill somebody—*bam!*—that’s it. An act of will. Not connected to any emotions or feelings, not governed by any ethics or morality or law.

They are very vicious people. Totally into attack. Most people think these people are so insane and wild and berserk and unpredictable. Not to me. Insane people are very predictable, because they’re trapped on the same mental and spiritual merry-go-round and all they can do is go round and round. For years I’ve been able to counter them—to stay alive—simply because I was one of them. I had a helluva good teacher

Penthouse: Was your father violent in his behavior with his family?

Hubbard: Not to me. But he beat up a lot of women

very badly. Blood, black eyes, busted teeth, the whole thing. He beat the holy hell out of women. His rages were incredible. I’ve read reports of the kinds of rages Hitler used to have, and they sound just like my father’s. He was especially touchy about food. He would always have somebody else at the table sample everything on the table before he’d eat it. I’ve seen him pick up an entire dinner table and throw it against the wall if he didn’t like the food or thought it was suspicious. He got very strange in the fifties. He had to have his clothes washed and washed and washed. He would take showers half a dozen times a day. I have often wondered if all of this might have been caused by the massive amounts of drugs and medication he took.

Penthouse: Your father took a lot of drugs?

Hubbard: Yes. Since he was 16. You see, drugs are very important in the application of heavy black magic. The personal use of drugs expands one’s conscious ability to break open the doors to the realm of the deep.

Penthouse: What kind of drugs did he generally use?

Hubbard: At various times, just about everything, because he was quite a hypochondriac. Cocaine, peyote, amphetamines, barbiturates. It would be shorter to list what he didn’t take.

Penthouse: Did he encourage you to do drugs?

Hubbard: Well, he used them with me. He was a real night person. We used to sit around all night, sit around his office or home, get loaded up, and talk. He had a pretty liquid tongue. He loved to talk. And of course, in the fifties, he decided that I was the heir apparent, so he wanted to teach me everything he knew. He started me out by mixing phenobarbital into my bubble gum, when I was 10 years old. This was to induce deeper trances in order to practice the black magic and to get an avenue to power.

Penthouse: How exactly would this work?

Hubbard: The explanation is sort of long and complicated. The basic rationale is that there are some powers in this universe that are pretty strong. As an example, Hitler was involved in the same black magic and the same occult practices that my father was. The identical ones. Which, as I have said, stem clear back to before Egyptian times. It’s a very secret thing. Very powerful and very workable and very dangerous. Brainwashing is nothing compared to it. The proper term would be “soul cracking.” It’s like cracking open the soul, which then opens various doors to the power that exists, the satanic and demonic powers. Simply put, it’s like a tunnel or an avenue or a doorway. Pulling that power into yourself through another person—and using women, especially—is incredibly insidious. It makes Dr. Fu Manchu look like a kindergarten student. It is the ultimate vampirism, the ultimate mindfuck. Instead of going for blood, you’re going for their soul. And you take drugs in order to reach that state where you can—quite literally, like a psychic hammer—break their soul, and pull the power through. He designed his Scientology Operating Thetan techniques to do the

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same thing. But, of course, it takes a couple of hundred hours of auditing and megathousands of dollars for the privilege of having your head turned into a glass Humpty Dumpty—shattered into a million pieces. It may sound like incredible gibberish, but it made my father a fortune.

Penthouse: When was the last time your father was seen in public?

Hubbard: Sometime in the sixties he granted an interview to British television. After that he didn't appear in public and just slowly became a recluse. One of the reasons he became a recluse was his own physical and mental condition was deteriorating so badly that he couldn't let the public or the Scientology membership know just what kind of shape he was in. He was a testament to the fact that Scientology didn't work.

Penthouse: Looking over the past 20-odd years of your life, what would you have done differently?

Hubbard: That's a complex question. I guess if I had it to do all over, I would do the same thing. With a father like mine, I don't think I could live it differently. It's been 23 years of hell, but sometimes you have to go through hell to get to heaven. It's been a very exciting life, I can say that. We come from a long line of rogues and scoundrels, going back 200 or 300 years, at least. And so I guess we're built for this kind of life. I've said that I am a preacher of adversity and controversy, and I thrive on it. Plus maybe by our example, people will quit trying for godship.

Penthouse: What if your father is alive? Would you be able to confront him?

Hubbard: Yes, I would love to.

Penthouse: Do you have any fear of him?

Hubbard: No. If he is sick, I would make sure he receives the best treatment I could find in the world for him. I consider him a victim of all this as much as I consider myself a victim. I consider him a victim of his own involvement with black magic, drugs, and his own delusions. He became a victim of himself.

Penthouse: Many people would say that your father is guilty of a great many sins and crimes. Do you think he should be punished?

Hubbard: He hasn't escaped punishment. I think at this juncture, dead or alive, he fell into his own insanity, and that's quite sufficient punishment. That is the most terrible jail of all, to be trapped inside his own head. With him it must be like being locked inside an exploding fireworks factory with no way out.

Penthouse: Have you ever wished your father dead?

Hubbard: I don't believe so, no. Regardless of the things he's done to me, we had a helluva good time!

Penthouse: Ripping the world off?

Hubbard: We did! I enjoyed my life then, and I enjoy it now. And really, as far as crimes go, I think my father has received the ultimate punishment, which is being locked and trapped in his own insanity. There's no way out for him.

SCIENTOLOGY RESPONDS

In order to present both sides of the controversy involving the Church of Scientology and L. Ron Hubbard Sr. to our readers, *Penthouse* contributing editor Allan Sonnenschein conducted a lengthy telephone interview with the Reverend Heber Jentzsch, president of the church. Excerpts from that interview follow.

Jentzsch: Let me say this. The media have been hyped by a number of people who are criminal—extortionists, perverts, etc.—and they make all these claims, and then you're supposed to respond to them.... The credibility of the individual is just absolutely out the bottom. And I don't find it instructive for us to just sit and respond to a bunch of allegations....

Penthouse: Is it true, as DeWolf claims, that Scientology is an extremely expensive and time-consuming process?

Jentzsch: It isn't expensive if one is looking at something that works. And Scientology is an extremely workable system. The churches that I know of—and I deal with religious leaders all across the country—some of them have a tithing system, and they pay it for their entire lifetime. That can be quite a bit of money, and it's also worthwhile. But let's move it out of the religious field and look at the psychiatrists, and they're running all this—crazy stuff, you know? You've got psychiatrists who are essentially charging an arm and a leg for electric shock, psychosurgery, drugging, all kinds of things which really are destructive to the individual. And they're funded by the state for those activities, into the billions and billions of dollars. So Scientology comes along.... First of all, it can be done from a person picking up a book like *Dianetics* and using it. And it costs them the price of the book. Or it can be done from the standpoint of the professional counselors and so forth.

Mr. DeWolf hasn't been with the church for 24 years, so he's hardly an authority on where we are at the present time. But it's like you say—is it expensive or time-consuming? Well, long before I joined the staff I did Scientology extensively and I didn't find it time-consuming. I found that I was able to do it and still carry on at a profession.

Penthouse: Can a poor man go through Scientology counseling?

Jentzsch: Sure.

Penthouse: He can?

Jentzsch: Sure. I mean he can go on the staff...and for that he receives his counseling, and he can do the whole thing....

Penthouse: Is it true that the media have been intimidated by church members when they try to report on the organization?

Jentzsch: Ha. Well, I just say, look with your own eyes. If they're intimidated, boy, how do you explain *Time* magazine, *20/20* on ABC TV, [CNN] national, ABC TV's *World News*, the *Los Angeles Times*, and the *New York Times* reporting all in one day on Scientology? I mean, how do you explain that? I mean, give me a break.

Penthouse: The allegation has been made that the Church of Scientology has hounded ex-members who have spoken out negatively about the church.

Jentzsch: Can you give me the names?

Penthouse: Gerald Armstrong is the first that comes to mind.

Jentzsch: Mr. Armstrong is my stepson-in-law; I know him quite well. He was a clerk, and he also drove a car. And that's all he ever did. When he left, he sort of tried to raise his status. If he thinks he's been hounded by Scientologists, I'll offer this: He says he's getting phone calls? We'll go to the police and put a tap on the phone. You know what a tap is, right? It just traces the phone call. Let's find out where the phone calls are coming from, because it isn't coming from our people. And I want to know. So to every guy who's screaming that, that's the thing I offer.

Penthouse: How do you respond to charges that L. Ron Hubbard Sr. may no longer be alive?

Jentzsch: Mr. Hubbard wrote me a letter last week. He wrote the court that has the records under seal and is keeping them in safekeeping, per our request. Now he wrote, and he carboned me, with a very well-documented, extensive kind of forensic background in this letter. What it is is one of the top forensic scientists in this country put together an ink that could have been formulated by the second of February 1983. He put that ink into a pen and sent it to Mr. Hubbard. Mr. Hubbard wrote a letter to the court, carboning me, and he also placed his fingerprints on that letter, underneath the ink and to the side. And top forensic analysts have proven that that is the ink that was formulated the second of February 1983. Number two: That is his writing. Number three: Those are his fingerprints. End of theme. But this letter establishes, in terms of forensic science and in court-acceptable records, that Hubbard Sr. is very much in control of this whole scene and his own monies, his own life, his own activities....

Penthouse: Is it possible to speak to Mr. Hubbard?

Jentzsch: I...I don't think that *Penthouse* magazine, given its past activities, would ever do a decent article on Mr. Hubbard. I think they would do everything they could to try to denigrate, to try to impugn the man, to try to destroy any credibility he has.... I've read *Penthouse* and the hate they have for anyone who is opposed to psychiatry, anyone who is opposed to electric shock and psychosurgery, as we have been...I have only to characterize it; that's the only reason they're opposed to it—that Hubbard has instituted an incredible educational capability. They hate it. Absolutely hate anything....

[Editor's note: Reverend Jentzsch is not as familiar with the editorial content of *Penthouse* as he thinks. Among

the very many critical articles on psychiatry the magazine has published are "Psychiatric Holocaust" (January 1979), "Psychiatry Kills" (April 1981), and "Electroshock: The Horror Continues" (June 1982).]

My current frame of mind is that the media will have to prove to us that they have some sort of modicum of ethics and integrity.... At this current point, I have no reason to trust them. None at all. I find them rapacious. I find them to be not interested in anything.... Six and a half million people who are living good lives, with a tremendous capability...but I don't find the media wanting to cover any of that....

Penthouse: We feel that Mr. Hubbard has a right to respond to the allegations made by Mr. Hubbard Jr.

Jentzsch: What you're saying is that you give a man who's a criminal the same right as a man who is not.

Penthouse: We're just trying to determine the truth.

Jentzsch: I've got to tell you, I've heard the same thing from every major media that has talked to me. And every one of them had just not one modicum of integrity.

Penthouse: We would be willing to work out any problems you might have before we meet with Mr. Hubbard.

Jentzsch: Well, I don't know that you could meet him, because I have no idea where he is.... I will tell you this: If I were ever asked by Mr. Hubbard, I will make sure that all of the media who have currently interviewed him will never, ever, ever, get a personal interview. I mean, I can guarantee you that *Time* magazine will not...I can guarantee you ABC TV will not; I can guarantee you that all the others will not. I will promise

that, and I will campaign for it if he ever decides that he wants to do a major media event of any kind or an interview of any kind. I will make sure that every one of those gentlemen never, ever, ever, ever, gets an interview with him. 🔑



The Church of Scientology in Los Angeles

Heber Jentzsch is still president of the Church of Scientology. He has not been seen publicly since 2012.

Journalist and Penthouse editor Allan Sonnenschein died in 2001, at age 59.

L. Ron Hubbard Jr., aka Ron DeWolf, died from complications of diabetes in 1991. He was working as a casino security guard in Carson City, Nevada, at the time. He was 57 years old.

L. Ron Hubbard, founder of the Church of Scientology, died of a stroke in 1986, two and a half years after this article appeared. He was 74 years old.

Our readers' exotic sexcapades brought to life...



PENTHOUSE LETTERS OH  .COM



WOMEN'S STUDIES

IT was my senior year of college and I'd already finished the required classes for my major, so I decided to expand my horizons and pick some subjects I'd never considered. My course load for fall semester consisted of Tap Dance 101, Intro to Ethnography, Gender and Sexuality, and Intro to Beekeeping.

Gender and Sexuality might seem like a weird choice for a 22-year-old guy who plays Ultimate Frisbee. But I have three sisters who love harping on me about feminism, so I already felt like a feminist. Though, admittedly, I didn't have any formal knowledge on the subject.

Well, it was an eye-opener. Lots of sad stuff about oppression and abuse, the patriarchy, and all that, but I also learned some cool historical facts. (Did you know the suffragettes practiced jiu-jitsu for self-defense?) As a bonus, the class was full of hot women. I know that's not the most progressive thing to admit, but I would be lying if I said I didn't notice.

Carly caught my eye from week one. She had flaming red hair, a slamming body, and strong opinions. By the time midterms came around, I was crushing on her hard.

One day I worked up the courage to ask Carly over for a study session. I didn't expect her to jump on me or anything, but I figured that if there was chemistry, maybe we could go out sometime.

Carly showed up at my newly cleaned dorm room with a pile of notes...and a pizza. My dream girl! We ate and talked, then studied. Our conversation was lively and spiced with flirtation. Sexual tension pulsed between us—the kind of raw physical energy that told me we'd be great in the bedroom.

At one point during our conversation about sex and feminism, I brought up something I'd been wondering about.

"Consent is obviously important," I said. "I get that. But now I'm hearing about 'affirmative consent.' What is that?"

"It just means both parties have to clearly say or indicate yes," she answered. "So just silence isn't 'affirmative consent.'"

"How do you bring that kind of thing up, though? It seems weird to interrupt a hookup to ask for consent."

Carly laughed. "You can do it without being weird about it. It just takes some creativity." She eyed me speculatively, and it was hard not to squirm under that hot gaze. "Here, let me show you. Stand up."

I shot to my feet faster than I meant to. My dick started to harden, and I tried to will it down. She wasn't going to ask me if I wanted to fuck her, was she? Because if so, hell to the fucking yes.

"Now," she said, standing in front of me, "consent doesn't have to be some awkward question. It can be dirty talk."

My dick stood fully at attention at that. I clasped my hands in front of me in an effort to hide it.

**"I WANT YOU TO
MAKE ME COME, AND THEN I
WANT YOU TO PUSH ME TO MY
KNEES AND SHOVE YOUR
COCK IN MY MOUTH."**

Carly glanced down at my hands, and when she looked back up, her eyes shone with mischief. "So, let's say we were in a sexual situation. I might say, 'I've been fantasizing about your cock for months.'"

I almost choked. "Er, uh, that's great."

She rolled her eyes. "Clearly you've never done dirty talk."

That was true, but I wasn't about to admit that to her. I cleared my throat and tried to think of something hot. "So then I'd say, 'That's perfect, because I've been wondering how your pussy tastes.'"

She sucked in a breath, and it was at that point I noticed her nipples through her tank top. (I'd already checked the outlines—she wasn't wearing a bra.) "And I'd say, 'I want you to taste it, but first I want to touch you and see if you're as big and hard as I imagined. Can I take off your pants?'"

"Yes," I said instantly, then backpedaled. "I mean, I would say yes. In this hypothetical scenario."

She grinned, sly as a cat, and stepped forward. Her hand landed on the button

of my jeans, and she unhooked it slowly, never breaking eye contact. "Let's make this a more hands-on lesson."

Holy shit, if this was affirmative consent, I was fully onboard. Feminism was fucking awesome.

She dragged the zipper down, then reached inside, wrapping her hand around my cock. I felt the heat of it through my boxers, and when she squeezed, my dick pulsed. "Mmm," she said, giving it a firm stroke. "It's even better than I imagined."

"Turnabout is fair play." I unbuttoned her jeans, then pulled out of her grip just long enough to shove them to the floor. She wore tiny blue panties, which I eased down reverently to reveal a perfect pussy.

She tugged her shirt off, uncovering a tiny waist and gorgeous tits with little pink nipples. "I'm going to suck your nipples until they turn red," I told her, and when she moaned a little, I leaned in and did it.

I toyed with the tight buds, licking and sucking them one at a time, using my fingers to pinch whichever one wasn't currently in my mouth. Carly sank her hands into my hair, pulling so hard it sent a little sting through my scalp.

When I finally pulled back, her nipples were red and swollen. I scraped a fingernail over one of them and she shuddered.

"I want to see you naked," she told me.

Carly made quick work of my jeans, boxers, and T-shirt. When we were both naked, she stepped forward, pressing those fine curves against me. I inserted my thigh between her legs, and her pussy slid wet and soft against it.

"You're wet," I whispered in her ear.

"And you're hard," she said, gripping my dick again. "I want you to make me come, and then I want you to push me to my knees and shove your cock in my mouth."

Jesus. She didn't have to tell me twice. I reached between her legs, sliding one finger inside to test her wetness, then pulling it out to circle her clit. I repeated the motion over and over, eventually moving to two fingers. She encouraged me with breathy sighs and murmured assents, and then her fingernails dug into my shoulder as her hips started pumping.

I could tell Carly was close to coming,

so I focused on her clit, rubbing in firm circles until she gasped and jerked against me. She crushed her mouth to mine, kissing me frantically.

When she was done, I pulled my fingers away and, while she watched, put them in my mouth and sucked her wetness off of them. Her cheeks flushed.

"That's so fucking hot," she said.

I was really getting the hang of this affirmative consent thing. "You're going to suck my dick now," I told her, pressing her shoulders until she sank to the floor at my feet. She opened her mouth eagerly and I thrust my cock inside, moaning when she closed her lips around it.

She sucked with enthusiasm, bobbing her head forward until my cock hit the back of her throat. The girl was voracious and extremely talented.

When I was close to coming, I pulled her off me. "I want to come in your pussy," I said.

Carly wiped her mouth and stood up. "How do you want to fuck me?"

Damn, she was hot, from her tousled red hair to her swollen nipples and plump pussy. I walked around her, studying every inch of this goddess. "I want to fuck you from behind. I want you screaming under me as you come."

She shivered. "Only if you pull my hair."

"You like it rough, huh?"

She whimpered. "Yes, sir."

I guided her to the bed, bending her over so her torso and one knee rested on the mattress while her other foot was on the floor. It opened her pussy to me, showing me how wet she was.

Carly tightened her fingers in the sheets and rolled her hips in invitation. I retrieved a condom from my bedside drawer and rolled it on, although my fingers were shaking so much I almost didn't manage.

"I have a condom on," I said, positioning myself at her entrance. "Now beg me for my cock."

"Please," she said instantly, turning her head to look back at me. "Please fuck me. Fuck me so hard and so deep I feel it all week. Fuck me—"

She broke off with a gasp as I pushed my cock in with one long stroke. I held her down as I buried myself in her hot, wet pussy.

"Are you okay?" I asked.

"Yes. Now fuck me." She squeezed her inner muscles around me.

I started pumping, slowly at first, enjoying the drag of my cock in her tight pussy. She fit me perfectly, and as I moved, she moved with me, arching her round ass and going up on her toes to help me get even deeper.

I reached beneath her hips with

I REACHED BENEATH HER HIPS WITH ONE HAND TO PRESS HER CLIT, THEN STARTED THRUSTING IN DEEP, HARD STROKES, JUST HOW SHE WANTED IT.

one hand to press her clit, then started thrusting in deep, hard strokes, just how she wanted it. She cried out and clutched the sheets tighter.

"Do you like that?" I asked.

"Yes," she moaned.

"Tell me what you like." I'd never realized how powerful dirty talk would make me feel. She was at my mercy, forced to tell me every sordid thought in her head, and I'd never felt more in control.

"I like how deep you get," she said, pushing back against me. "I like how strong you are."

"You like my dick?"

"It's perfect." She arched her back, and I remembered her demand. I sank my fingers into her hair, clenching the strands near her scalp and using her hair as leverage as I pumped in and out of her body. She cried out. "Yes. Take whatever you want."

What I wanted was to get her off hard and fast before giving in to the orgasm building in my balls and tingling at the base of my spine.

I tugged Carly's hair and pounded hard. My hand was still beneath her, and every thrust forced her swollen clit over my fingers. A minute later she came with a scream, and as her pussy clenched rhythmically around me, I swore and came, too, with a sharp intensity that had me seeing stars.

When the tremors faded, I pulled out and collapsed next to her. We were both breathing hard. "Was that good?" I asked.

Carly looked at me through pleasure-hazed eyes. "It was incredible. You sure learn quickly."

I grinned and stroked her sweat-dampened back. "I have the best tutor." I waggled my eyebrows roguishly. "Any other feminist concepts I should learn tonight?"

She laughed. "Baby, you have no idea."

—Ethan S., Northampton, Massachusetts





THE LORNA PROJECT

KATRINA shook her head in her snobbish, teasing way as she kicked me gently under the table, blowing Dunhill smoke from one side of her thick lips. Oh God, she could say the stupidest things with those lips, but the sideways smoke-blowing blew my mind every time.

Her lips were the thickest thing about her—feather-soft but so fleshy they often seemed to overflow the space they had been designed to fill on her thin, elegant face. She could have literally just grunted “duh” and I would have wanted to scoop her up like the slice of heaven she was.

But I had a plan for that evening, and I’d be damned if I was going to let her take me off the scent.

She was still talking: “Do you have some kind of kink or brain damage where you think you have to talk about, like, electrodes on my nipples to turn me on?”

She grinned, lopsided and perfect. Her delicate face could never be straight, but that made it even better. “And do you seriously think that *anything* science-y you say is going to ever make me tolerate, much less want to *kiss*, that horrible, slutty *walking flesh bucket* you call your best friend?”

She was talking about Lorna. Lorna had been a friend of mine with occasional benefits for a decade. Katrina was convinced she hated Lorna. Lorna, whose breasts were each the size of Katrina’s

entire backside; but despite their size, Lorna’s double-Ds were light, with an elegance of their own. They didn’t just float in water—they floated on air.

“*Lorna*,” Katrina muttered. She stood up and yanked me to my feet. Then she yanked me toward the bedroom. I barely fought her, although this wasn’t part of my plan. “I adore you, Peter, but if you think that girl is of any interest sexually, I don’t know why you’re dating me and not her. She’s like Marilyn Monroe. I’m like...Olive Oyl!”

“Oh, come on now, Katrina. You’re so cute and sexy. You’re more like...oh, what’s her name, the *Beetlejuice* girl?”

“See, you don’t even remember her name! It’s Winona Ryder.”

“Yeah, and she’s still hot. You think Marilyn Monroe would have been hot past 40?”

“Of course,” Katrina sulked. “I hate her.”

“Who? Lorna or Marilyn?”

“Both! But not as much as I hate nipple clamps and sensors or *anything* weird on my nipples!”

“Where did you get nipple clamps from? All I’ve mentioned in this entire discussion is genital sensors.”

She gave me a disapproving sniff and the sort of frown you get from girls who are incapable of doing anything with their faces that isn’t inviting, no matter how angry or fake-angry they are.

When they act like this, I often wonder whether, maybe, if I were ten percent stupider, my girlfriends would like me that much more. But her tone—teasing,

affectionate—put me at ease.

If you were an outside observer reading nothing but our words, you might think we were on the verge of fisticuffs rather than the sort of cuffs we were probably heading toward.

Who knows—she might have actually been a tiny bit annoyed under her banter, but I wasn’t about to let a little thing like that ruin my evening. She knew I loved her body, even if there wasn’t much of it to love. It was the fire inside of it that made me wild. Well, that and her silky inner thighs. They’re so soft I can barely tell where the air surrounding them ends and the flesh begins.

Focus, Peter, I reminded myself. *Either focus on your plan or just throw her down and have her like she wants you to anyway.*

Oh, sure, I thought, *that would be kind of me, wouldn’t it? Take the easy way out and never let her find out what it is she really wants.*

I took a deep breath and stared into her big, wild, green eyes. “Babe, I know rather than listen you want to think about whatever clever little thing you’re going to say to prove me wrong as soon as I stop talking, right? That’s another thing science tells us people do—”

“Oh my God. Science. So sexy.”

“How do you think vibrators get made?”

By way of reply, she pulled her skirt up an inch. She was wearing the type of fishnet leggings that go up around the top of the thigh and are held there by elastic,



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so the inch was the difference between looking at her leg through fishnet and looking at her bare flesh.

You little jerk, I thought fondly. “Yeah, science made those, too. Anyway, science tells us that people’s conversations suck because they don’t actually listen, they just think about what their own retort is going to be, but their retort doesn’t make any sense, because they weren’t listening to what the other person was saying in the first pl—oh my God.”

She giggled. While I was rambling, she had been sliding that clever little hand of hers up between my thighs, just to the tip of my dick.

I’m not sure whether Katrina thinks about this consciously, but she ruins her “I’m just a dumb cutie pie who’s not up to any tricks, never mind me” routine every time she touches me. The sensual intelligence in those little paws gives her clever, bawdy mind away every time—even if I could ignore the way she outwits me while I think she’s letting me pontificate. It’s one of the many reasons I keep old Katrina around (well, she’s only 23, but you know what I mean). But she was driving me perfectly nuts about Lorna in about 40 different ways.

I pushed her hand away—it took me about a week’s worth of willpower to do so; there went my leg day at the gym. Laughing, I said, “Now, look here, Missy. You know how everybody thinks you girls are all so jealous of each other you can’t think straight?”

“Are you sure you don’t mean *envious*?” She crossed her arms. “We can’t think straight because we are *envious*? Envious of what, may I ask?”

I sighed. “You’re never going to let me live down the day I made you sit through my ‘envy versus jealousy’ vocab lecture, are you?”

“Nope,” she grinned, pulling closer and stroking my backside. Her pinky finger was making dangerous revolutions around my ass. “Envy,” she said, mocking my pedantic tone, “is when you want something somebody else has. Like... oh, I don’t know...like I might like to have Lorna’s huge, round, perfect ass.”

Her finger moved in closer to my ass and kept going around, slower and more gently this time, finding that one nerve she knows

I have that makes me shiver every time she plays it just the right way; hesitating, massaging it, enjoying the way I squirmed before she went back around again.

I laughed and pushed it away. *Jesus, I have the willpower of a god.*

“Now, listen!” I said. “Evolutionary psych nerds and regular society types always say you’re all maliciously jealous for survival: You’re jealous, envious bitches because you want to make sure your man spends his resources on your offspring and not your rivals’ kids. And maybe that’s partly true, but they did a different series of experiments... and it wasn’t with nipple clamps! This is where your listening skills need some work, my darling. If I go for the short version, will you *listen* this time?”

“Blah, blah,” she sulked, pushing me

HER FINGER MOVED IN CLOSER TO MY ASS, FINDING THAT ONE NERVE SHE KNOWS I HAVE THAT MAKES ME SHIVER EVERY TIME.

onto the bed, where she alighted on my lap, black curls bouncing down the ivory skin of her back. Her jade-green tank minidress set all her colors off deliciously. I had never noticed before that her black hair had a slight auburn cast; against the green, she looked like a forest fire. Wild. I enjoyed the sensations but went on talking.

“Now, they did this experiment where they took men and women and attached sensors to their genitalia so they could see whether the subjects were, uh, responding to the, uh, the *images* they were seeing.”

“Let me guess.” She put her pointy chin in her hands like a well-poised elf. “It was porn!”

“Yes, it was porn. But more to the point, it was all different kinds of porn. Gay, straight, lesbian. And guess what they found?”

“Most of it was badly produced?”

I laughed. “Well, yes, but they found that according to the sensors, men only responded to one kind of porn—either stuff with all men in it, so they were gay, or straight and lesbian porn, stuff with women.

Statistically, I mean, not everyone. But by and large, men either got all bothered by straight and lesbian porn—porn with women in it, right?—or they were just plain gay and only got turned on by the men.”

“You’re not trying to tell me Lorna is a man, are you?”

“You’re impossible!” I slapped her butt and it barely jiggled—but enough to make me wonder whether I shouldn’t give up on my entire ridiculously convoluted plan and just take her like she wanted me to. *Nahhhhhh*. Anyway, that would leave Lorna literally in the closet, and I doubted she would ever forgive me for that one.

“I *am* trying to tell you something about Lorna, sweetie, but you gotta let me spit it out. Okay, so the *women* were the interesting ones in the experiment.”

“Aren’t we always?”

I rolled my eyes. “Sexism is illegal now, you know.”

“Oooh, is it torture dungeon day?”

“That was Wednesday.”

“You know, you are honestly beginning to intrigue me, Peter.”

She ran back out to the living room to fumble for another Dunhill and mix herself one of my more expensive scotches with Diet Coke. I tried not to wince.

Katrina leaned across my bedroom doorway and sipped irresistibly, dropping cigarette ash on the hardwood floor. There was no way she was as un-hot as she pretended to think she was. Or thought she thought she was. Well, she was pretty drunk. Not too drunk, I hoped. She wasn’t much of a drinker, so when she started trying to use drinks as comic props, I had to look out for her performance issues.

“Would you *listen* to me?”

“Ooooh, it’s angry. That’s hot.”

“I’m sure it is,” I grinned. “Now shut up. When they showed the women the same porn—gay porn, straight porn, just men, just women, both, whatever—the women responded to *everything*. Whether they said they were gay, straight, didn’t matter—they were all turned on by everything they saw. Which is why I came up with my theory.”

“Oh, Christ, that’s right, you had some kind of thought you wanted to torture me with.” She rolled her eyes.

“Torture, shmorture,” I said. “My theory is that the reason you women are so much



more envious than we are is because you're actually capable of seeing how hot your competition is."

She gave me a furious look.

"Whaaaaaat?" I said. "Everybody else is saying you're senseless, selfish people! I'm saying that women are capable of understanding things we men can't even notice in the first place! And the only reason that other girls being hot bothers you more than other guys being hot bothers us is because you notice at a visceral, bone-deep—"

"By which you mean pussy-deep?"

"Fine, if you want to be vulgar, my little sex pig: You notice at a pussy-deep level just how hot the other women you're in competition with are, and it drives you nuts."

"Uh-huh."

"You don't know what you want to do, you see? You want to compete with each other, because you know that neither of you has a dick, and of course you want a dick.

But, oh my God, do you really just want to compete with each other when you could be *touching* each other? It's not like all breasts are the same, for example. I mean, do you *really* hate Lorna?"

"Of course. What, did you think you were going to talk me out of that with your phony philosophy? Your goofy science experiment with mental patients watching porn with nipple clamps..."

I couldn't take it. I grabbed her and threw her back onto the bed and kissed that soft, crazy mouth. "Where do you get this stuff?"

Katrina kissed me back hungrily, like she was a desert wanderer and I was a canteen of Perrier.

"You hate her huge, soft breasts!"

"Despise them," she assented, sadly stroking her small handful of a right breast.

"You hate them so much you just want to have them for your own, don't you? You want to be able to reach out in bed every night and squeeze all that soft, firm flesh till

you're satisfied..."

"Oh, I'll never be satisfied," she admitted. Suddenly her eyes went wide. "I did not say that!"

"Oh, yes, you did," I grinned. "Her breasts, my cock. You could have them every night and *never* get enough."

"Shut up, I was thinking about something else." She went to slap me, but instead her hand found its way down between my legs. Before either of us knew it, she was playing with my cock like it was the finest thing she had ever touched. I hadn't expected this, but I let my back arch a little and groaned.

Then I got my shit together. Pinning her two arms together with one hand, I took Katrina's right breast in the other hand, stroking it from its tip toward the little crevasse between her two breasts. I knew from lots of tasty experience that this would drive her wild; her flesh there was so sparse and fine, the nerves were insanely concentrated, and the slightest

HER TONGUE AND FINGERS EXPLORED EVERY INCH OF LORNA'S BREASTS—BUT THEN SHE STARTED GETTING CREATIVE.

touch set every inch of her on fire. She sighed audibly; she couldn't keep up the angry act for a second when I did that. Not even if I said:

"Would you hate them so much if you could have them for a few minutes?"

"What do you mean, 'have them'?" Lorna's breasts? Are you gonna cut her up so I can wear them till they get cold or something?"

"He had better not," a low, purring contralto voice said from inside the closet.

Yes, I had Lorna literally pinned in the bisexual closet, doing God knows what with herself in there while my girlfriend and I talked about how much she hated Lorna and her big, firm, perfect tits.

Katrina's face turned from alabaster to fire-engine red in a millisecond.

"YOU HAD HER IN OUR CLOSET?!" Katrina screamed.

"Oh, you loved it," Lorna smirked, slipping out like an Amazonian goddess.

Lorna was the healthiest girl I'd ever met—it would be misleading to say she worked out every day. Lorna played in the sunshine like a giant cat, and then she feasted in the shade like a queen. Lorna had the most stunningly bisexual personality I'd ever met, as well; I loved to introduce her to people, because she made every single person who saw her wonder what exactly their type was.

Tonight Lorna was wearing a pale pink and tan leather negligee. The straps were wide, the garment cut into a V to show off the perfect musculature of her stomach, fleshy and strong. The honey color of her hair and her tanned skin all contrasted with the light leather and pink taffeta to make her look like an oversexed shepherdess.

I looked at Katrina. Her mouth was hanging wide open—trapped between being angrier at me than she had ever been at anybody and wanting to jump into Lorna's cleavage head-on. Door number

two took about ten seconds to win. I didn't even get a chance to grab anything 'til they had been running their hands up and down each other's bodies for at least five minutes. They were both so different, but each perfect in her own way—Katrina all green and black and slim, Lorna all pink and brown and healthy.

Lorna got Katrina's simple dress off first, so I got to slip my fingers into all the familiar nerve endings that I knew would make Katrina insane. And oh, did she go insane. I thought for a moment I was giving her a stroke, but she was just having, and I quote, "a feeling I didn't know a body could feel—my vagina was purring and screaming at the same time, was all. And also, Lorna's tit was in my mouth."

Katrina couldn't get enough of Lorna's breasts. Lorna couldn't get enough of Katrina's silky little legs, either, but she's had girls before. Katrina, on the other hand, was like a kid at an amusement park. Her mouth, her tongue, her fingers all explored every perfect inch of Lorna's breasts—but then Katrina started getting creative.

Katrina has a nice tight pussy, but somehow she managed to get Lorna's breast halfway into it, which was when all heaven and hell broke loose. Katrina came uncontrollably from having Lorna inside of her—and I, much to my chagrin, also lost control.

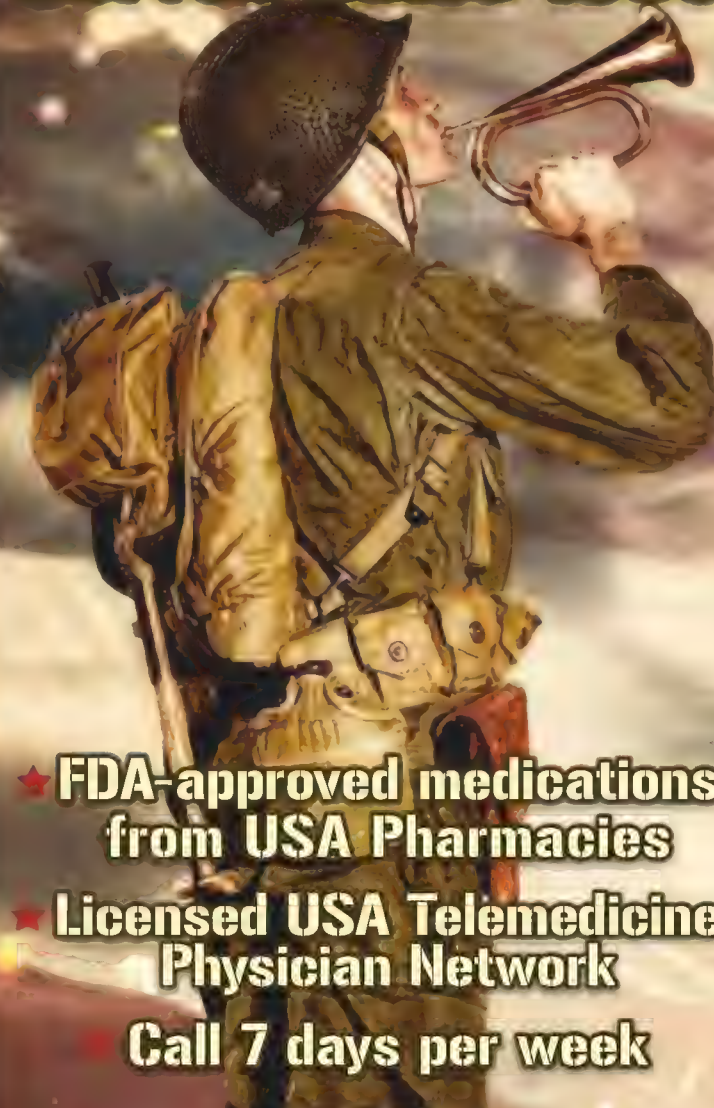
I thought that was it for me. But the girls weren't about to have it. I had given them something they'd never dreamed of, after all—well, at least, Katrina hadn't. She immediately dove down toward my cock, sucking it like she had never done before, and in 30 seconds I was more than good to go. I had each of them for a good 20 minutes before we all came within ten seconds of each other and collapsed, as happy as we had ever been.

—Peter S., Chicago, Illinois

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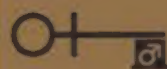
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